

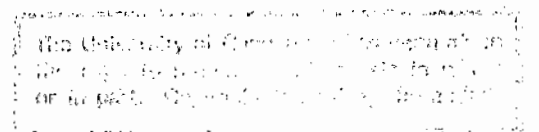
**RESTRUCTURING PATERNALISM: THE CHANGING
NATURE OF LABOUR CONTROL ON WINE FARMS
IN KOELENHOF**

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**DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
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ABSTRACT

(i)

The central hypotheses advanced in the dissertation are:

1. Wine farmers in the Western Cape have, since the 1970s; been increasingly changing the form of labour control on their farms from co-ercive to co-optive techniques.
2. The Rural Foundation has played a key role in promoting and facilitating these changes to co-optive methods of labour control.
3. The changes to co-optive forms of labour control have resulted in corresponding changes in the form of paternalism that has characterised the relations of production in the Western Cape for the past three centuries.
4. Whilst the change to co-optive managerial techniques has improved working and living conditions for farmworkers, it has not necessarily reduced the dependency of farmworkers on the farmers, nor empowered workers.
5. Farmworkers have themselves internalised the ideology of 'enlightened' paternalism, with this ideology being fundamental in structuring their work-place behaviour. Trade unionists need to recognise this, and strategise accordingly.

The empirical data that is used both to verify the fore-mentioned theoretical statements, and to provide information used in the construction of these statements, was gathered by means of interviews. Interviews were conducted with nine farmers/farm managers and 25 farmworkers from wine farms in Koelenhof, two members of both the Rural Foundation and the Food and Allied Workers Union and an organiser for the National Council of Trade Union's National Union of Wine, Spirit and Allied Workers. This empirical information is integrated into a conceptual method that draws from both the structuralist and social historian perspectives in agrarian social theory. In this sense, the discussion is both abstract and theoretical, and descriptive. Furthermore, the discussion is, at times, prescriptive, arguing that trade unions should adopt particular tactics in their attempts to defend and advance the interests of farmworkers in South Africa.

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I would like to thank the farmers/farm managers and farmworkers from the wine farms that were studied in Koelenhof, as well as James Lamprecht and Andre Lyker of the Rural Foundation, Johann Hamman and Jan Theron formerly with the Food and Allied Workers Union, and Lennox McCarthy of the National Union of Wine, Spirit and Allied Workers. Without the information provided by these respondents, this dissertation would not have been possible. I would also like to thank Antonia Goliath, of the University of Namibia, for her assistance in the production of the final document. Above all, I would like to thank my supervisor, Dr. Dave Lincoln, for his patience, support, and sensitive guidance.

It must be understood that it is necessary to use racial categories such as "white" and "coloured" when engaging in social analyses in the South African context. Use of such categories should in no way be seen to reflect my political viewpoint.

ABBREVIATIONS

(v)

The following titles may, at times, appear in their abbreviated form:

COSATU	:	Congress of South African Trade Unions
FAWU	:	Food and Allied Workers Union
FWP	:	Farm Workers Project
NACTU	:	National Council of Trade Unions
NUWSAW	:	National Union of Wine, Spirit and Allied Workers

INTRODUCTION

Wine farmers in the Western Cape have been restructuring labour relations on their farms for the past two decades in an effort to modernise and rationalise their farming enterprises in order to remain profitable. Central to this restructuring process has been the change from coercive to co-optive methods of labour control. The primary motivation underlying this restructuring was the desire to overcome the (coloured) labour shortage that wine farmers were increasingly experiencing in the 1970s and 1980s. The improved working and living conditions that were integral to the co-optive method of labour management were seen as a means to entice farmworkers to remain on the farms rather than leave to seek more rewarding employment opportunities in urban areas. The other reason why farmers changed their managerial techniques had to do with the idea that more highly satisfied workers were also more responsible, motivated, and productive.

Throughout the 1970s, and particularly the 1980s, an increasing number of wine farmers began improving the working and living conditions of farmworkers, implementing mechanisms for effective communication and conflict resolution between management and labour, and facilitating the attendance of farmworkers in various skills upgrading programmes. As will be illustrated, the Rural Foundation, a utility company established in 1982 to promote the 'advancement of rural community development' (Rural Foundation Annual Report, 1989), played a key role in facilitating and promoting the change to co-optive management.

The change to co-optive managerial techniques was accompanied by a corresponding change in the form of paternalism that had characterized the relations of production on the wine farms in the Western Cape for the past 300 years. By paternalism is meant that the relationship between employer and employee was viewed in terms of the father-child model (Groenewald and Lubbe, 1984:3). It will be argued that the new methods of labour management did not mean an end to such relationships: the form of paternalism changed to incorporate the 'enlightened' views associated with co-optive management. 'Enlightened' paternalism, like its traditional counterpart, still posited both farmers' and farmworkers' social identities within the harmonious functioning of the farm as community (du Toit, 1991:8). Whilst the change to 'enlightened' paternalism has seen the farm as a 'total institution' open up in a number of ways, the changes have not reduced the dependency of farmworkers on the farmer, nor effectively empowered workers. Farmworkers have internalized the notion of the farm as harmonious community, and articulate their interests within the framework of the interests of the farm as a whole. The absence of a separate workers' discourse means that trade unionists and other intellectuals of the counter-hegemonic bloc must articulate and disseminate their ideas within the discourse of 'enlightened' paternalism. For this reason, the incorporation of farmworkers in the progressive trade union movement would require the development of a stratum of farmworker intellectuals who can facilitate the unionisation process and provide democratic leadership on individual farms.

The presentation of this forementioned discussion will be both descriptive and analytical. The empirical evidence obtained from the interviews with nine farmers and 25 farmworkers from wine farms in Koelenhof will be integrated with the theoretical statements I advance. Particularly important in the construction of my hypotheses are the ideas of Scharf (1984) and du Toit (1991). It must be pointed out that the empirical evidence was not gathered merely for the purposes of refuting or verifying my hypotheses: much of the empirical information has been used to construct theoretical statements explaining how agents themselves (in this case farmers and farmworkers) conceive of their actions. It can thus be seen that the way I conceive of the relationship between the theoretical and the empirical can best be described as realist, synthesizing elements from the positivist and idealist frameworks.

My conceptual framework draws from the two seemingly antagonistic theoretical approaches in agrarian social theory - the structuralist and social historical approaches - to present a discussion that is both abstract and theoretical, and descriptively accurate. Within the structuralist framework, the causal relationships which underlie and structure the observable social behaviour on wine farms in Koelenhof will be analysed. Included here would be analyses of:

- * The historic development of capitalism in agriculture in South Africa

- * The role of the state in the process of restructuring in agrarian capitalism
- * The nature of restructuring on wine farms in the Western Cape
- * The ideology of 'enlightened' paternalism
- * Structural constraints that limit the effective empowerment of farmworkers

These analyses provide the context within which the case study is located. The motivation behind the historically specific study is to provide an accurate description of the ways in which farmers/farm managers and farmworkers are experiencing and making sense of the restructuring process. The restructuring process in South African agrarian capitalism has not been characterized by one logic, but has rather taken a number of different forms in different agricultural sectors and geographical regions. The narrow focus of the case study allows for the understanding of the particular form that restructuring has taken on wine farms in the Western Cape, and informs us of the role that the Rural Foundation has played in promoting and facilitating this process. The detailed regional emphasis of the study facilitates the elaboration of the precise nature of co - optive methods of labour control in the Western Cape, and the particular reasons behind the changing techniques of labour management. Furthermore, the rich empirical evidence gained by means of the interviews

with farmworkers provides insight into the various ways that farmworkers have responded to both co-optive labour management and the ideology of 'enlightened' paternalism. It is precisely upon such information that the assertion that trade unionists must attempt to defend and advance the interests of farmworkers on wine farms in the Western Cape within the framework of 'enlightened' paternalism is based. It is crucial that trade unionists take heed of the heterogenous nature of farmworkers in South Africa in their attempts to organise and mobilise these workers: regional socio - political dynamics, differences in the class, ethnic and cultural composition of farmworkers, as well as employer attitudes, all affect the particular power relations on different farms, and must be taken into account by trade unionists in their attempts to represent the interests of farmworkers.

A SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTERS

Chapter 1 outlines both the conceptual and empirical methodologies that are utilized in the study. The conceptual methodological framework that is constructed is that of materialism. The particular approach which will be adopted is a synthesis of the approaches of the social historians and the structuralist Marxists. In this sense the conceptual methodology is an attempt to take account of both structure and agency. The empirical methodology adopted in the study is a practical realization of this conceptual framework. The approach that will be argued is realist in the sense that structured interviews are

used to confirm certain hypotheses I advance, whilst at the same time the information gained from the interviews will be used to construct theoretical statements to explain the actions of agents.

Chapter 2 reviews literature on the form and tendency that capitalism has taken in the South African countryside. The first section explores the contributions made by the structuralists and the social historians to the debate over the development of a capitalist agriculture in South Africa. Thereafter follows a theoretical account of the relationship between the state and agrarian capital. The next section looks at the restructuring process in South African agriculture, whilst finally special attention is given to restructuring in the wine farming sector.

Chapter 3 contextualizes the analysis of restructuring in the wine farming sector in terms of a case study of nine wine farms in Koelenhof. Interviews with the farmers/farm managers of these farms provides the basis for an in-depth look at the form that restructuring is taking in Koelenhof.

Chapter 4 will analyse the various ways in which farmworkers in Koelenhof are experiencing the restructuring process. On the basis of interviews with 25 farmworkers it will be argued that paternalism has not disappeared from those wine farms that have changed to co-optive forms of labour management, but has rather changed its guise to a more enlightened form. The various ways in which farmworkers have responded to these changes will be

discussed. Finally the potential for trade unions to organise farmworkers in Koelenhof will be assessed.

CHAPTER 1

METHODOLOGY

1.1 CONCEPTUAL METHODOLOGY

This sub-section will address the explanatory framework that I will employ in my analysis of the social relations on the wine farms in Koelenhof. The reasons underlying the choice of a materialist perspective will be elaborated before a detailed investigation of the Marxist research programme will be offered. It will be argued that the primacy of the social relations of production be retained as the programme's heuristic. On this model, non-economic relations are not necessarily derived from economic relations, these relations rather presuppose this primacy. In a sense, my methodology will be somewhat eclectic, drawing concepts from different (Marxist) theoretical tendencies. It will be an attempt to move beyond the 'dualisms' which have characterized contemporary debates within the Marxist research programme, and South African agrarian studies: namely between the structuralists and culturalists (or social historians). I will be primarily concerned with analysing the 'determinations' influencing the behaviour of farmers and farmworkers in Koelenhof, and in this respect will be mostly concerned with structuralist theory. This abstract, analytical tendency, however, denies the subject a constitutive role, and neglects the processes through which the subject is formed. Here I will draw from the humanist and culturalist Marxists to explain how the

individual agents of my analysis experience and make sense of the given social structures and processes.

Positivism is criticised primarily for its adherence to the view that there is only one logic of science, in which the methods of the natural sciences are unproblematically extended to the social sciences. On this view, positivists have established 'rational' standards to evaluate the degrees of certainty of scientific theories, based on their notion of 'empirical invariance'. Such an approach is undermined, however, if one (correctly) adopts the view that there is no theory-neutral observation language: no 'facts' with which to verify/falsify theoretical statements.

Idealists recognise this dilemma, and adopt an anti-thetical relationship to the assumptions of positivism. Social reality is no longer seen as a set of material conditions, but is rather conceived as being constituted by the individual experience of subjective interpretations which explain why individuals behave the way they do. In their attempts to purge the social sciences of any natural scientific assumptions, idealists render social reality unsusceptible to causal analysis. Such an approach unduly restricts the ontology of the social sciences – to the way agent's conceptualise and understand their own conditions of existence. Furthermore, in an attempt to overcome the positivist account which sees society as coercing the individual, idealists view society as the result of intentional human action. In other words, in their attempts to overcome and correct the problem-areas of positivism, idealists have gone to the other

extreme.

Materialism, in a sense, combines elements of both approaches. A qualified naturalism suggests that the social sciences can be modelled on the natural sciences, but such an account should take into account the fundamental differences between human beings, and the rest of the natural world. Materialism views human intentionality and material reality as being related relationally. Here we need to explain those structures/mechanisms which are causally related to, but do not mechanistically determine particular manifestations. Realism accepts that we have no immediate/direct access to reality, and hence 'epistemological objectivity' as advocated by positivists does not exist. Hence there is no absolute truth, and no ultimate explanations.

Marx's method can be seen to be both realist and naturalist (Keat and Urry, 1975:96). His naturalism is evident in his belief in the possibility of an objective science of social formations, whilst his realism is apparent in his thesis that the observable features of social life are explicable only in terms of their essences, or underlying structures. Hence he rejects positivist science in its search for general laws in the phenomenological features of life. Marx's writings are not a coherent development of ideas, as theorists such as G A Cohen would have us believe, but rather a highly ambivalent and contradictory discourse (Hirst, 1985:30). This has resulted in competing interpretations of Marx's work, and has resulted in several discourses within the Marxist research programme. The humanist and culturalist Marxists

such as Gramsci, Williams, Thompson among others, emphasise Marx's earlier writings (1844 Manuscripts, German Ideology etc) where the influence of Hegel was most evident, while the analytical and structuralist Marxists, such as G A Cohen, Althusser, Poulantzas etc. point to Marx's later writings (Capital, Grundrisse, Theories of Surplus Value), where his concern was the analysis of the internal structure of the capitalist mode of production. Time does not allow for an investigation of Marx's writings, in order to try to discover the 'real Marx'; I will rather evaluate some of the contemporary interpretations within the Marxist research programme in terms of how appropriate these theories are for my analysis of the economic, ideo-political, and cultural relations in Koelenhof.

One of the most important contemporary 'classical' Marxist interpretations is provided by G A Cohen (1978). While Cohen gives useful insights into the internal dynamics of the capitalist mode of production, his argument lapses into reductionism and functionalism. Cohen argues for the primacy of the forces of production, positing a linear, causal chain linking the productive forces, the relations of production, and the ideo-political superstructure. Instrumentalist conceptions of the state in which the state is seen as acting in the interests of a homogenous capitalist class, is associated with this approach. Little attention is paid to class struggle; capitalism is seen as having a 'terminal disease' in which its inherent contradictions will lead to its inevitable collapse and the transition to socialism.

Clearly Cohen's approach, which leaves no room for political, ideological, and cultural considerations, could not account for capitalism's repeated survival of major crises. The regulation approach (eg. Aglietta, Lipietz) which developed in France during the 1970s addressed this problematic: how and why capitalist economies come to be transformed in the course of their development. Regulation theory comprises two conceptual levels:

1. The 'regime of accumulation', which describes the interaction between transformations in the conditions of production (changing technology and labour process) and transformation in the conditions of realisation of the resulting output changes. In other words the 'regime of accumulation' connects the individual decisions of producers and the socially determined effective demand they must confront.
2. The 'mode of regulation' consists of the ensemble of social institutions, structures, and implicit norms which organises and 'canalises' the actions of individuals, and in this way 'regulates' class and intra-class conflicts which determine the path of accumulation (Gelb, 1991).

Elements of the mode of regulation relate to all aspects of the accumulation process : the wage relation (in the labour process and the labour market), the structure of demand, competition between capitals, and the financial system (Gelb, 1987, 1991). The role of the state, and its policy in relation to these aspects of accumulation, is of prime importance in shaping the mode of regulation (Lipietz 1987, Jessop 1983). It is the mode

of regulation that provides the link between the regime of accumulation, and a nationally specific growth model (Gelb, 1991:5). By using regulation theory, I will analyse the accumulation process(es) on the wine farms in Koelenhof, linking the behaviour of individual farmers with the dynamics of the South African national economy as a whole.

But how are the actions of individual farmers 'canalised' through the particular mode of regulation? Here we need to turn to the notion of ideology; a concept that has had a history of neglect and vulgarity within the Marxist research programme. It was the humanist Marxist Gramsci who broke with the Marxist preoccupation of seeing ideology as 'false consciousness'. Gramsci saw ideology as an arena of class struggle : 'the terrain on which men move, acquire consciousness of their position, struggle' (Gramsci 1971:377). On this view, the consciousness of individuals, is the effect of the system of ideological relations into which the individual is inserted. It is ideology which creates - interpolates - subjects, and makes them act the way they do. Gramsci argues that ideologies are disseminated via their agents, the intellectuals; these may be categorised into two fundamental groups: those representing the dominant class(es), or bourgeoisie, and those representing the subordinate class(es), or proletariat. It is in this sense that Gramsci's concept of ideology must be seen together with his concept of hegemony - how the ruling class(es) reproduce their dominance through consent (with respect to allied groups) and co-ercion (with respect to antagonistic groups). The ruling (or hegemonic) class is that

class which has been able to articulate the interests of other social groups to its own by means of ideological struggle. It is the intellectuals who articulate the interests of their class – politically, economically, and culturally – through various material and institutional structures (hegemonic apparatuses) such as political parties, employer organisations, trade unions, schools, churches, cultural organisations, the media, etc.

Other important theorists of ideology, who can be accommodated into the framework offered by Gramsci, are Volosinov (1981), as well as the two key figures from the Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, Richard Johnson (1979) and Stuart Hall (1981). Althusser (1970) provides some useful, albeit functionalist, ideas on how ideology functions as a system of persuasion, creating and reproducing subjects as the 'tragers', or bearers of the functions of the system of production (Keat and Urry, 1975:135). Althusser does not mean here that every aspect of each person is determined by their function in the system of production; ideology and culture have a relative autonomy, but are determined in the last instance through the relations of production. Hall (1981), following Althusser's notion of ideology as a system of persuasion, refers to ideology as those mental frameworks – the languages, concepts and categories which different classes and social groups use to make sense of social reality. Hall, Johnson R, and other scholars from the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies at the University of Birmingham, have contributed greatly to analyses concerned with how ideology works, through their use of a wide variety of theorists concerned

with the study of signifying practices: de Saussure in linguistics, Levi-Strauss in anthropology, Barthes in literary criticism, Lacan in psychoanalysis, Foucault in the philosophy of the sciences, amongst others. Of particular influence in the emerging theoretical framework of the Birmingham Centre is the work of the Marxist philosopher of language, V N Volosinov (1981). Volosinov (1981) points out that everything ideological possesses meaning: it represents, or stands for something lying outside itself; in other words, it is a sign. Wherever a sign is present, so too is ideology; everything ideological possesses semiotic value (Volosinov, 1981:146). Such an approach, I argue, has much to offer for the concrete analyses of particular ideologies; signs being the link in the chain between ideologies (revealed in signifying practices) and their interpretation (inscribed in consciousness). But how do we analyse their interpretation?

Regulation theory, and the theories of ideology, provide a solid conceptual framework from within which to account for the determined conditions of social practices on the wine farms in Koelenhof. These, however, cannot help analyse the outcome of these determinations: the interpretations of the various ideologies. Here we need to employ concepts offered by the culturalist Marxists and social historians, for example Raymond Williams, E P Thompson, Belinda Bozzoli, amongst others, to understand how different ideologies are interpreted and acted upon by farmers, farmworkers and their respective intellectuals.

How are the new ideas being disseminated to social agents in Koelenhof - eg. for farmers the ideology of economic rationalisation, for farmworkers the ideology of trade unionism - penetrating the world-views and practices of these subjects? The culturalists emphasise the importance of human agency within Marxism, reading structures of relations in terms of how they are 'lived' and 'experienced' in the consciousnesses of individuals. Central here are the notions of:

1. Culture, which is defined as the meanings and values, in fact whole way of life, which arise amongst distinctive social groups and classes on the basis of given historical conditions and relationships, and
2. Experience, which are the lived traditions and practices through which these 'understandings' are expressed, and in which they are embodied (Hall, 1981:26).

While this approach has much merit when used together with a more abstract explanatory approach, as it stands on its own, the culturalist or social historian perspective will not do. Whilst I would argue that this perspective can be included in the Marxist paradigm, in that experiences are understood fundamentally as class experiences, and that their analytical focus is that of culture of oppressed classes, this perspective has much in common with the idealist approach. Culturalists restrict their use of abstract, theoretical concepts, and in this way seriously limit their ability to explain a social phenomenon. At the same time, the culturalists argue that abstraction

destroys authenticity, detaching the object from its real surrounding set of relations. E.P Thompson, for example, claims that the structuralist Marxists' use of externally-derived concepts 'distorts real historical materials into theoretical preoccupations' (cited in Johnson, R, 1979:60). Culturalists reject the base/superstructure metaphor, arguing that all economic, political, and cultural phenomena are collapsed in the notion of experience. This leads to fundamental problems: no distinctions are made between levels or instances, and hence one cannot analyse the correlation between these levels, eg. the economic and the political. A related problem concerns the culturalists' definition of class; class is seen as a wholly political and cultural category, and not as a determined position with respect to the forces of production. The objective reality of the social relations of production is obscured in this view, with particular political consequences such as reformism (Callinicos, 1983). Furthermore, the ontology of the culturalists is limited to the level of appearance, ie. that which is observable. Through their hostility to abstraction, culturalists do not adhere to the essential realist method of penetrating 'beneath the surface' to discover the inner essence of phenomena. Social agents are conceptualised as making their own culture, with not enough emphasis placed on the 'ground of determinations' (Johnson, R, 1979)/'generative mechanisms' (Bhaskar, R, 1979) that restricts/enables such actions. My final criticism concerns their empirical methods in which they attempt to understand a phenomena in the way that the social agents of the study conceptualise and understand the phenomena. This gives rise to

problems of relativism.

Thus, whilst culturalist concepts and methods are a crucial complement to the abstract structuralist method, on their own they cannot adequately explain a phenomenon. Structuralist methods are better for explaining a social phenomenon, but also, if used on their own, will not do. Contemporary debates in South African agrarian studies have tended towards a one-sided critique of the other position, eg. Morris versus Keegan (see African Perspective Vol 1, No's 5/6,7/8). Such debates are retrogressive in that they merely explore the differences between the two positions. At most they have a clarificatory function, and are generally non-accumulative modes of critique (Johnson, R, 1979:55). Synthesis is a difficult and complex project that is clearly out of the question for this dissertation; I will rather utilise concepts from the one approach to overcome deficiencies in the other. Hence, while my conceptual framework is structuralist in that it is necessarily abstract and theoretical, I will be employing concepts from the culturalist approach to provide the understanding how an ideology such as 'enlightened' paternalism is being realised in practice, and how various determinations, such as agricultural restructuring and progressive trade unionism, are actually affecting the subjects in Koelenhof. In many senses, Gramsci can be seen to sit at the interface of the culturalist and structuralist approaches, and it is through his approach that synthesis is conceivable. His extended concept of culture - ideology - hegemony links the 'commonsense' world - view of social agents, with the realm of

ideas in circulation, and in turn, these ideologies with determinate power relations. Gramsci's central weakness is his neglect of the relationship between the practices of hegemony, and the functioning of the capitalist mode of production. This can be overcome, through supplementing Gramsci's ideas, with concepts employed by the structuralist Marxists, particularly the regulation school. By utilizing concepts from the regulation school, the theorists of ideology, Gramsci, and the culturalists, I feel I can overcome many of the problems associated with the Marxist research programme, and in this way can 'save' its heuristic : the primacy of the relations of productions.

1.2 EMPIRICAL METHODOLOGY

The aim of the empirical research was twofold:

1. To elicit information about the ways in which both farmers and farmworkers on wine farms in the Western Cape have experienced and made sense of the restructuring process:
2. To gather information from both the Rural Foundation and Food and Allied Workers Union's Farm Workers Project (FAWU FWP) about the roles and functions of their respective organisations.

To meet the first aim, nine farmers/ farm managers, as well as 25 farmworkers from wine farms in Koelenhof, an area lying just outside Stellenbosch, were interviewed. All interviews with farmers/farm managers and farmworkers were conducted between January and September 1990¹. A structured interview schedule was

¹ All interviews were conducted with the farmer/manager and farmworkers of Farm A on the 16/03/1990. Interviews were conducted with the farmer of Farm B on the 09/03/1990, whilst interviews with workers of this farm took place on the 09/03/1990, and the 14/03/1990. Interviews with the manager and workers of Farm C were conducted on the 23/05/1990. Interviews with the farmer/manager of Farm D took place on the 26/04/1990, whilst interviews with workers took place on the 28/04/1990. Interviews with both the farmer and the workers of Farm E took place on the 12/08/1990. Interviews with the farmer of Farm F took place on the 03/03/1990, whilst interviews with workers took place on the 03/03/1990 and the 09/03/1990. Interviews with both the manager and workers of Farm G took place on the 13/08/1990. Interviews with the manager and workers of Farm H took place on the 18/08/1990. Interviews with both the farmer and workers of Farm I took place on the 22/09/1990.

used for all farmers/ farm managers, and farmworkers (see Appendixes 1, 2 and 4).

With regards the second aim structured interviews were conducted with James Lamprecht, the industrial relations consultant of the Rural Foundation, Jan Theron, the former general secretary of FAWU, and Lennox McCarthy, an organiser for NACTU's NUWSAW. Furthermore, a number of informal discussions were held with Andre Lyker, the Rural Foundation's Community Development Officer for the Stellenbosch area, as well as with Johann Hamman, the FAWU FWP organiser. I also interacted, in an informal capacity, with various members of the Stellenbosch Advice Office, as well as the Western Cape Farmworkers Research and Resource Project (WCFRRP). Valuable information was gathered during such interaction, much of which is implicitly integrated into many of the arguments and discussions in this dissertation.

The choice of Koelenhof as the area in which to conduct my research was made after consulting with Johann Hamman, the FAWU FWP organiser in the Western Cape. Hamman assured me that the area contained many wine farms which had made, and were making the change to co-optive forms of labour control, as well as farms which were affiliated to the Rural Foundation. It was hoped that I could provide useful information to the FAWU FWP organisers to facilitate the successful organisation of farmworkers in the area. Unfortunately, this idea did not materialise due to the resignation of Johann Hamman from FWP, after which COSATU's efforts to organise farmworkers in the Western Cape came to a

virtual standstill.

Access to interview farmers/farm managers, and consequently farmworkers, on six Rural Foundation farms in Koelenhof, was facilitated through Andre Lyker, the Rural Foundation Community Development Officer for Stellenbosch. Access to the other three farms that were not affiliated to the Rural Foundation was gained by approaching farmers/farm managers in the area. These farms were selected randomly, from among the ten-or-so remaining wine farms in Koelenhof. Five farmers were approached, two of whom refused to participate in the study.

The interview schedules for farmers/farm managers of both Rural Foundation and non-Rural Foundation affiliated farms (Appendices 1 and 2) were intended to elicit both descriptive information about the farm, as well as the attitudes of farmers/farm managers to the restructuring process. Whilst all questions were open-ended, the first six questions of the interview schedules for farmers/farm managers (appendices 1 and 2) were tightly structured, after which they became less rigid in order to give the advantage of adaptability to follow up ideas, probe responses, and investigate motives and feelings. For example, when interviewing the farmer of farm F, and the farm manager of farm A, after hearing that they had had action brought against them by a trade union and an advice office respectively, I deviated from the structured interview schedule to incorporate questions to tease out their perceptions of the events that had unfolded.

On a whole, I found all the farmers/ farm managers willing to answer all the questions that were asked. The farmers/farm managers showed no suspicion nor mistrust: after all, if they had thought that my research could result in bad publicity, they would not have allowed me access on their farms (as was the case with the two farmers/farm managers who refused). This suggests that my sample was not necessarily representative: the farmers/farm managers who applied coercive management techniques, in all likelihood, would not have allowed research to be undertaken on their farms, lest the evidence collected resulted in bad publicity for the farm. On the other hand some of the more 'liberal' farmers/farm managers may have seen the research as an opportunity for good publicity, so that others may learn of their benevolent and enlightened approach to labour relations. This raises problems of validity, problems that are integral to the interview method of research. The interviewees can be expected to have given responses that they perceived I wanted to hear. Knowing that I was a student from the University of Cape Town, they associated me with a particular world-view, and are likely to have presented their information accordingly.

With regards the interviews with farmworkers, access to a representative sample proved to be a formidable obstacle which could not be adequately circumvented. My research plan was to interview at least two male farmworkers, and one female farmworker from each farm; this was the least number of workers from each farm that had to be interviewed to counter the problems

of interviewee bias. Despite coming very close, this target remained out of reach because in most cases, I could not select the farmworkers myself. Permission to interview farmworkers was granted by the farmer/farm manager himself, who usually imposed limits on who could be interviewed, and for how long. On all but four farms, the farmer/farm manager selected the workers himself. On eight of the nine farms, the farmers/farm managers made sure that they let both the interviewees and myself know that they knew who was being interviewed. This proved to be very intimidating for the interviewees, given their powerlessness and vulnerability to being victimised. I had no choice but to work within these constraints. Attempting to gain access to interview farmworkers without the consent of the farmer/farm manager himself, could have potentially jeopardised my research project and resulted in the victimisation of interviewees.

Other problems which affected the validity of the evidence collected from the interviews with the farmworkers had to do with what Benney and Hughes (1977: 237) call the convention of equality. I, the interviewer, was someone with noticeable linguistic and cultural differences: I was an 'outsider' who was clearly not 'deel van die plaas' [part of the farm], and was therefore potentially someone to be viewed with suspicion and mistrust. Furthermore, I was asking sensitive questions concerning their relationship to their employer. Although I assured complete anonymity, the farmworkers could not be certain that I would not convey their critical viewpoints to the farmer/farm manager. As a result, some farmworkers seemed

unwilling to answer certain questions: for example, more than half of the interviewees did not answer the questions relating to their political affiliation, nor about their attitude toward trade unions. Furthermore, I felt that many farmworkers felt restrained from engaging in criticism and articulating points of view that they perceived might offend their employer.

Despite the difficulties encountered in trying to gather valid information from both farmers/farm managers and farmworkers, patterns did emerge both in terms of descriptive and interpretative information attained. The descriptive information in particular, for both farmers/ farm managers and farmworkers, can be seen to be precise and reliable. The problem remains however, as to how the information attained from the case study relates to the conceptualization of the project. In a sense, the empirical information attained vis. a vis. the case study in Koelenhof confirmed several of the theoretical statements, or hypotheses, I advanced. Examples of theoretical statements that the data confirmed were: that wine farmers in the Western Cape are increasingly adopting co-optive management techniques; that the Rural Foundation has played a central role in promoting the change to co-optive management; that the change to co-optive management techniques have resulted in a corresponding change in the form of paternalism; and that the changes have not necessarily reduced the dependency of farmworkers on the farmer, nor effectively empowered farmworkers.

It should be noted, however that a case study of the behaviour of human subjects in a particular context, cannot, ultimately, be the basis for refuting, or verifying, the theoretical statements that explain the underlying causes behind such behaviour. In the words of Collier (1979: 42), 'agency is never an explanans, always an explanandum'. The interviews were not undertaken for the sole reason of gathering data to verify or refute the hypotheses. As was argued in the previous sub-section, positivists are mistaken in assuming that data can be used to ultimately verify or refute theoretical statements.² The aim was rather to show how the structural processes that were explained were being realised in practice: how farmers/ farm managers and farmworkers were experiencing and making sense of the restructuring process. In this sense, the case study actually contributed to the construction of the theoretical statements, though not to the extent of a research project conducted solely within an idealist framework. Whilst the relations of production found on wine farms in Koelenhof may be typical of the Stellenbosch area, they are not necessarily typical of the rest of the Boland and Western Cape. The number of co-optively managed farms, for example, in comparison to coercively managed ones, may be assumed to be far higher than in the more outlying wine farming areas of the Western Cape such as the Koue Bokkeveld. It would be a grave mistake to draw too many theoretical conclusions from such a case study: this was definitely not the rationale behind the study. The realist framework within which I have

² Realists such as Bhaskar (1979) point out that positivists such as Durkheim privilege the observation language, which is itself, necessarily a theoretical construct.

applied the case study requires rather a synthesis of elements of both the positivist and idealist research programmes. From the positivist framework, I have used the data gathered from the interviews to confirm certain hypotheses I have advanced, whilst from the idealist framework, I have used the ways in which agents themselves explain their actions to construct theoretical statements which explain such actions.

CHAPTER 2

CAPITAL AND THE STATE IN THE DEVELOPMENT AND RESTRUCTURING OF AGRICULTURE IN SOUTH AFRICA

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter reviews literature on the form and tendency that capitalism has taken in the South African countryside. The first section explores the polemic between structuralists and social historians over the development of a capitalist agriculture in South Africa. Thereafter, the manner in which the South African state has had a bearing upon and responded to the interests of agrarian capital is examined via secondary source material. In the next section the restructuring process in South African agriculture is described. Finally, special attention is given to restructuring in the wine farming sector.

2.2 THE DEVELOPMENT OF A CAPITALIST AGRICULTURE IN SOUTH AFRICA

The writing on the development of capitalism in agriculture in South Africa has been marked by various analytical frameworks; namely the approaches of the neo-classical populists (Lipton 1977, Wilson 1971), the neo-marxist structuralists (Trapido 1971, Morris 1976, Greenberg 1980), and the social historians (Beinart 1982, Bradford 1985, Keegan 1986). The discussion will be

primarily centred around the contributions made by the structuralists and social historians in their explanations of the development of capitalist social relations of production in South African agriculture. Before this polemic is entered, however, a brief summary and critique of the neo-classical populist approach will be provided.

The thrust of the neo-classical populist argument is that the development of capitalism in South Africa has been mutated by a repressive state interfering in the economy. The solution to the current economic crisis lies in facilitating and implementing 'Friedmanite' free market economic principles with the state withdrawing from the economic sphere. Lipton (1977) for example, argues that once the politically inspired apartheid legislation that has inhibited the potential viability of black farming in South Africa, is dismantled, black 'small - scale' farming would flourish in a rational market. Such an approach separates the political and economic spheres in an artificial way, with no conception of class formation and struggle. The neo-classical populists have a romanticized view of the 'free market system': capitalism without exploitation under the direction of the good bourgeoisie (Levin and Neocosmos, 1987:72). Little emphasis is put on the historical development of capitalism in South Africa, or on the comfortable relationship that has existed between the bourgeoisie (both national and international) and the racial order.

Lipton (1977) advocates the withdrawal of the state from the

economy, however as Neocosmos and Levin (1987) point out, the particular path of capitalist development (as suggested by her), in which small-scale black farmers compete favourably with large-scale (white) farmers, could not possibly be achieved without major state intervention. Politically, the neo-classical populist approach can be seen to be closely associated with the position of the World Bank, and of monopoly capital (Neocosmos in Levin, 1987).

The structuralist school on the other hand, has been greatly influenced by classical historical materialism, and offers what are essentially class analyses. The most important analysis of the development of capitalism in South African agriculture is undoubtedly that of Morris (1976). Morris (1976) builds on Lenin's (1962) idea that there are two main 'paths' or 'roads' to the development of capitalist agriculture:

1. The 'American' or farmer path (from below) in which there is no landlord economy, or alternatively it is broken up by revolution which leads to the confiscation and splitting up of the feudal estates. In this scenario, the peasant (or a section of the peasantry) predominates, becomes the sole agent of agriculture, and develops into a capitalist farmer (Winson, 1982: 383).
2. The 'Prussian' or landlord path (from above) in which the feudal, landlord estates slowly evolve into capitalist farms. The state is used to maintain the subservience of

the peasants to the landlord class while the estate is being transformed toward capitalist production. Such a transition 'condemns the peasants to decades of most harrowing expropriation and bondage' (Lenin 1962, cited in Winson, 1982: 383).

Morris attempts to apply the 'Prussian' model to South African agriculture. He argues that capitalist agriculture in South Africa emerged from a semi-feudal system, with the white landholder extracting rent from the squatter peasantry (in the form of cash, kind, or labour). With the onset of the mineral-based industrial revolution in the late 19th century, and the consequent creation of a large home market for agricultural produce, landowners increasingly began shifting their source of income from rent to the sale of farm produce. In this process, the squatter peasantry were transformed into labour tenants. The basic features of this system were 'the giving of services for a certain period in the year to the farmer by the native and/or family in return for the right to reside on the farmer's land, to cultivate a portion of land, and to graze stock on the farm' (The Native Economic Commission 1932, cited in Morris, 1976: 294). Central to this process was the state, which through coercive intervention, for example the 1913 Natives Land Act, impelled rent paying tenants and sharecroppers into labour tenancy, and made them increasingly dependent on cash and in-kind payments. By the 1920s, the labour tenant form of exploitation disguised what was de facto wage labour, with labour-power being sold as a commodity. Morris (1976: 305) points out that by 1920,

the labour tenant did not reproduce his labour - power by means of the products of his own labour, and was unable to provide for his family's subsistence on the basis of the land granted to him by the farmer. Hence agriculture in South Africa by 1920, was predominantly capitalist. Furthermore, the state, as well as the social formation as a whole was capitalist, so agrarian relations by extension must too have been capitalist (Hyslop, 1990: 17).

Morris (1976) poses the question as to why labour tenancy came to dominate agriculture in South Africa. Why wasn't the peasantry completely separated from the land, and transformed into 'free' wage labourers? The answer, Morris argues, is to be found in the conditions which affected the terms of the class struggle, and ensured the tendency towards the 'Prussian' path. The first condition concerns the labour market: with the market for labour opening up on the mines on the Reef in the late 19th century, with its better working conditions and higher wages, it became increasingly difficult for farmers to secure workers unless they granted them land (Morris, 1976: 310). Furthermore, agriculture in South Africa was characterised by the existence of a powerful landlord class which had a strong influence on the state, especially after 1924 with the coming to power of Hertzog and the Pact Government. The creation and reproduction of an immobilised labour tenancy ensured an adequate supply of farm labour for white farmers. In the situation of the absolute repression of the African peasantry, in which they were denied access to both land and markets, there never emerged in South Africa a stratum of rich peasants who could challenge the

economic power of the landlord farmers. Hence the 'Prussian' road to capitalist agriculture was the path that characterized South African agriculture (Morris 1976).

Morris (1976) raises some important conceptual questions in his analysis: questions that have always been at the core of Marxist analyses of the agrarian question. Hazelkorn (1981:300) points out that Marx did not have a good understanding of the 'laws of development' of agrarian, as opposed to industrial capitalism. He assumed agrarian capitalism was akin to industrial capitalism, and was not aware of the specific laws of penetration of capitalism into agriculture (Hazelkorn, 1981:300).

It is (Marxists) Kautsky (1899) and Lenin (1905, 1962) who pose the question of the difference between agrarian, and industrial capitalism. They argue that the path of development of agrarian capitalism does not differ fundamentally from that of industrial capitalism. Lenin (1962, cited in Hazelkorn, 1981:301) argues that 'capitalism merely penetrates into agriculture particularly slowly and in extremely varied forms. Kautsky (cited in Hussein and Tribe, 1983:107) similarly argues that, as with industry, agriculture follows the laws of capitalist development: there is a steady extension of capitalist production, proletarianisation, and an increasing concentration of capital. In other words, the tendencies remain the same, but their form differs.

Morris (1976) is clearly influenced by the ideas of Lenin and

Kautsky in his analysis of the historical development of agrarian capitalism in South Africa. Implicit in his argument is Kautsky's point that both pre-capitalist and capitalist agriculture are centred around the same factor of production (land). This land cannot be increased, as opposed to the industrial means of production whose quantity can be increased. Therefore the development of capitalist agriculture can only take two forms: either the transformation of pre-capitalist into capitalist farms, or pre-capitalist farms ceding their land to capitalist agriculture. The important point here is that capitalist agriculture cannot develop independently of existing pre-capitalist agriculture (Hussein and Tribe, 1983:125). Banaji (1977) reaffirms the point that capital historically subsumes the labour process as it finds it. Such an understanding makes room for those social categories that do not conform to a fully developed capitalist labour process (Winson, 1982:389).

Morris (1976) argues that the important point to realize when analysing whether or not agriculture was predominantly capitalist by 1920, is that agrarian capitalism does not require the direct producers to be entirely separated from the means of production. The process of proletarianisation in agrarian capitalism is of a different form to industrial capitalism. Morris, following Kautsky and Lenin, argues that the proletarianisation of the peasantry takes the form of peasant households being dispossessed of their land (to varying degrees), not having enough land on which to subsist, and therefore being forced to sell their labour-power as a commodity to the landlord farmer. Kautsky

labour-power as a commodity to the landlord farmer. Kautsky (cited in Hussein and Tribe, 1983:108) points out that this has two important implications:

1. Proletarianisation (of the peasantry) is not necessarily coupled with the disappearance of non-capitalist units of production.
2. The relation between capitalist and peasant farms is not one of competition, but is complementary.

Morris (1987) argues that the allotment of land to rural workers is very often in the interest of rural employers: it lowers the social wage, and increases the dependency of the worker on the farmer, hence weakening resistance to exploitation. Morris argues that theorists (such as Greenberg 1980, Bradford 1985, Beinart and Delius 1986) who posit that South African agriculture was not capitalist by 1920, because of the absence of free wage labour, are missing the crucial difference between agrarian and industrial capitalism. Despite the absence of free wage on farms by 1920, a relationship of real appropriation existed between non-workers and the direct producers, with the labour process being under the direct organisational control of the farmer (Morris, 1976:305). Labour-power was being sold as a commodity with workers being remunerated primarily through money wages, and wages in-kind. Hence, argues Morris, agriculture in South Africa was clearly capitalist in nature by 1920.

Morris's analysis has been criticised by a number of theorists. Hyslop (1990) for example, criticises Morris for his economism. He points out that Morris puts too much emphasis on economic relations, with no understanding of the ideological, juridical and political in his definition of mode of production. He also criticises Morris's instrumentalist view of the state, in which the state is portrayed as an instrument of the dominant fraction(s) of capital. Drawing from the work of Eley and Blackbourn (1987), Hyslop challenges Morris for trying to determine the exact instance in which capitalist relations became dominant in the countryside. Bourgeois revolution, argues Hyslop (1990) is a gradual process that took place in South Africa between 1900 and 1940. Other criticisms by the 'social historians', particularly Keegan (1987) and Beinart and Delius (1986), relate to Morris's 'shaky empirical foundations' on which his thesis is constructed. These criticisms, which relate more particularly to Morris's method, will be elaborated on in the review of the contributions of the social historians.

A second attempt at applying a 'Prussian path' analysis to South Africa is by Trapido (1971). He utilises Barrington Moore's ideas as to how certain types of agrarian social relationships produce a certain form of political society. Trapido argues that both Germany and South Africa, in their phase of early capitalist development, were not characterised by the emergence of free wage labour in the countryside, but rather by a situation in which the state placed severe restrictions on the mobility of the peasantry, harnessing them to the land. The

reason for this, he argues, had to do with the powerful influence the agriculturalists in both societies were able to exert over the state. In 19th century Germany, the agrarian landlord class (the Junkers) had exercised control over state power, and had therefore been able to influence the path of capitalist development. Similarly in South Africa, the conservative agriculturalists were hegemonic in the ruling class alliance, at least until 1970, and had exerted pressure on the government to implement the labour repressive legislation that has characterized capitalist development in South Africa. Just as in Prussia where the labour repressive legislation had benefitted the industrialists - the marriage of iron and rye - so to in South Africa the particular form of capitalist development benefitted other sectors of capital other than agriculture, in this case mining capital - the alliance of maize and gold (Hyslop, 1990:7).

Morris's (1976) analysis of the development of capitalism in South African agriculture differs somewhat from the argument provided by Trapido (1971). The most significant difference concerns Trapido's portrayal of the state in the first half of the twentieth century as being dominated by an alliance of 'maize and gold'. Morris's analysis contradicts this position, suggesting conflict between farmers and mining capitalists. The two main areas of conflict between these groups was over the price of agricultural products, and over competition for African labour (Beinart et al, 1986:15). The agrarian landowners were not always the most influential interest group in respect to

state policies: Morris (1976) argues that the governments of both Smuts and Botha clearly functioned in the interests of mining capital. It was only in 1924 with the rise to power of Hertzog and the Pact Government that the balance of power swung in the favour of white agriculture (Beinart et al, 1986:15).

A third attempt at comparative analysis using the 'Prussian path' is that of Greenberg (1980). Greenberg argues that the ability of farmers to follow the 'Prussian path' depended on the relative weakness of the bourgeoisie, and their inability to structure an alternative development strategy. It is in racial orders, Greenberg argues, that farmers adopted the Prussian model, using racial disabilities to harness the rural labour force to the land (Hyslop, 1990:21).

Greenberg argues that agriculture in South Africa could only be called capitalist as late as 1970, with labour tenancy being the dominant labour form in the long and drawn out transition to capitalist agriculture. As agriculture became more commercialised, mechanized, and capital intensive, so the farmers' demands for a state controlled labour market lessened. By 1970, industrial capital could begin pressurising the state to dismantle the racial order and establish a free labour market.

There are obvious disparities between Morris's (1976) and Greenberg's (1980) analyses. The main point of contention is the date when South African agriculture could be called capitalist. Here I would support Morris's argument (elaborated in detail

earlier in this sub-section) that the labour tenancy form of labour exploitation, as found in South Africa up until 1970, is consistent with capitalist social relations of production in the social formation as a whole, and therefore not indicative of pre-capitalist social relations.

Hyslop (1990) challenges Greenberg's (1980) notion that the bourgeoisie have an inherent interest in a democratic form of state and society. There is no pre-determined relation between social classes and particular ideologies: their relationship is a contingent one (Hyslop, 1990:31). Whilst for the past two decades, industrial capital in South Africa has been advocating a free labour market, this is not to say that their interests were not served by the state - controlled labour markets that have been the order of the day since segregationist ideologies were implemented in South Africa.

The other important school of theorists who have provided significant analyses of the development of capitalist agriculture in South Africa are those whom one can loosely term the social historians. These theorists offer a different view of economy and society: the 'view from below'. Central to such a perspective is the concept of human agency: reading structures of relations in terms of how they are 'lived' and 'experienced' in the consciousnesses of individuals. Bradford (1985), in her study of the I.C.U. in the South African countryside, provides a contradictory analysis of the nature of agrarian productive relations in the 1920s to that of Morris (1976). Based on

detailed empirical evidence, Bradford sees agrarian productive relations in the 1920s as being characteristic of a period of primitive accumulation, rather than capitalist production per se. She points out that the majority of white farmers in the 1920s were in the process of capitalising and could therefore not be categorized as fully fledged capitalists. The same held true for most farm labourers who were not proletarians, but were rather being proletarianised (Bradford, 1985:26). Directing her to this conclusion were the subjective self perceptions of labour tenants and white farmers: labour tenants did not perceive themselves as wage labourers¹, and white farmers did not perceive themselves as capitalist farmers.

Keegan (1989) provides some sharp criticisms of the macro - view adopted by Morris (1976). He points out that at the heart of Morris's (1976) 'misconceptions' is his use of metropolitan models (such as the 'Prussian path'). Hyslop (1990) supports Keegan's suggestion that colonial models would be more appropriate for comparative analyses. The transition from feudalism in the European context is very difficult from that in the non-European world, with the colonial economy not developing in the womb of the old mode of production, but as part of an evolving capitalist world order (Keegan, 1989:10). The development of that world order was geographically uneven and

¹Bradford (1985) argues that rural resistance in the 1920s was informed by a strong peasant consciousness, i.e. access to land and other productive resources was of greater importance than proletarian issues such as wages.

combined, as was capitalist development in South Africa itself (Keegan, 1989:10). This touches on the point that Beinart et al (1986:15) raise, of the importance of regional political economies with differences in physical environment, class structure, ethnic composition, access to markets, and linkages to other forms of production. Thus, whilst in the interior capitalist farmers were a 'tiny minority' by 1920, in the Western Cape agricultural production could be termed capitalist 'well before the mineral discoveries' (Ross, 1986:56). Ross argues that slave - owning farmers in the region were capitalists from at least the turn of the 18th century. His argument is based on the evidence that slave - owning wine and wheat farmers in the Western Cape were commercially orientated and produced on an extensive scale. Krikler criticises Ross's argument on the grounds that Ross privileges the relations of exchange over the relations of production, and confuses the process of commercialization with capitalism (Bradford, 1990:82). Susan Newton - King (1980), in her study of the labour - market of the Cape Colony in the early 19th century, proposes a different scenario to that of Ross. She argues that agriculture in the Western Cape could be categorized as capitalist only from the early 19th century, when labour - power became a commodity. Important in the process of the commoditization of labour in the Western Cape was the abolition of the slave trade in 1807 and forced labour in 1828 by the British colonial state. After such time, Khoisan and Africans, having lost access to land within colonial boundaries, sold their labour - power to farmers under capitalist contractual law (Newton - King, cited in Bradford,

1990:69). Despite the contrary views of Ross (1986) and Newton - King (1980) on precisely when agricultural production in the Western Cape became capitalist, it is clear that capitalist development in agriculture in this region preceded that of the rest of South Africa by at least 100 years.

Whilst the social historians point to processes of social differentiation and regional specificities in the development of capitalist agriculture in South Africa, they are criticised for being anti-conceptual and anti-theoretical. Such criticism has been made of social historians in general, and refers to the inadequate emphasis given to 'ground of determinations' (Johnson 1979), 'generative mechanisms' (Bhaskar 1979), and 'social forces that structure consciousness' (Morris 1987). Through their tendency to avoid abstraction and externally derived concepts, their analyses remain limited. As Murray(1989:647) argues, it is because the social historians have restricted the scope of their explanations for agrarian transformation almost exclusively to the experience and consciousness of rural social actors, that they have failed to develop a logically consistent and precise definition of capitalism. In contrast to Marxist analyses, the social historians tend to ignore the sphere of production altogether, or else treat it as theoretically non-problematic. As a result, the social historian perspective has much in common with liberal 'conventional wisdom', with its privileging of racial categories at the expense of class analysis (Murray,1989:648). These criticisms notwithstanding, however, it should be pointed out that this approach has much merit, and is

indeed a crucial complement to structuralist analyses of the development of capitalist agriculture. The empirically rich material discovered and described by the social historians is absolutely necessary to verify/refute and qualify the more abstract and conceptual analyses of the structuralists. The debate between the social historians and structuralists [particularly Keegan (1989), and Morris (1987) respectively] which has ensued around the agrarian question in South Africa has now become retrogressive, with the debate merely serving to confirm and clarify the position of each perspective, without pointing to any 'middle ground'. Furthermore, as Bradford (1990:85) points out, both these perspectives are not themselves homogenous theoretical categories; over - simplification and generalisation in usage of 'social historians' versus 'structuralists' obfuscates fundamental differences within each approach.

In sum: Morris (1976) offers the most rigorous analysis of the development of capitalist agriculture in South Africa. Morris revolves his argument around fundamental conceptual questions, and locates his analysis in a sound theoretical framework. However Morris's analysis is too broad an overview to be useful on its own, and should be read together with relevant 'micro-studies' offered by the 'social historians'. Particularly important studies from this approach are those by Ross (1986) and Newton - King (1980). These studies provide useful insights into the complex social differentiation of farmers and farmworkers, and point to the regional differences that have occurred in both

the intensity and nature of the development of agrarian capitalism in South Africa.

2.3 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE STATE AND AGRARIAN CAPITAL IN SOUTH AFRICA

This analysis of the relationship between the state and agrarian capital in South Africa will be both historical and contemporary. A class-theoretical structuralist conception of the state will be applied in analysing how the relationship between the state and various fractions of capital has shifted in the last three decades. It will be argued that the state, since the mid-1970s, has attempted to facilitate a new accumulation strategy in South Africa, one that favours manufacturing and finance capital at the expense of agrarian capital generally, and small- and middle-sized agrarian enterprises in particular. It will be pointed out that this policy is by no means clear-cut and free from contradictions.

From an orthodox Marxist perspective, the state is seen as a central constituent of the superstructure, reflecting and reproducing ruling class domination at the level of the infrastructure (Reich et al, 1972). The state can be seen to comprise the executive, administration, judiciary, police, and army, and holds the legal monopoly over the use of coercion. Early Marxist conceptions of the state can be termed 'instrumentalist' in that they conceptualized the capitalist state as always acting on behalf of the ruling class

(bourgeoisie). Critics of that conceptual approach contend that state policies did not always favour the bourgeoisie, and the personnel who made up the state were not always members, or even close allies of the bourgeoisie (Reich et al, 1972). Similarly an overly deterministic view of the state can be identified with the state monopoly capital (STAMOCAP) theories, particularly the capital-theoretical tradition that has its roots in the writings of Lenin and Bukharin (Jessop, 1982:37). Such theories, however, are not theories of the state as such, but rather focus on a particular stage of capitalism, and the decisive role of the state in its reproduction (Jessop, 1982:57). Hence the state is analysed to the extent that it facilitates capital accumulation: protecting markets, securing demand, and regulating trade. There is a fusion of the state with the monopoly sector of capital, with no account of intra-bourgeoisie conflict. Furthermore, such capital - theoretical accounts neglect the political and ideological role that the state plays in protecting the hegemony of monopoly capital (Jessop, 1982).

A more sophisticated, less reductionist, and less deterministic account of the state is put forward by the class-theoretical structuralists. Poulantzas (1978), the most influential theorist from this school, builds on Gramsci's concept of hegemony to explain how the ruling class(es) dominate(s) and lead(s) others through a combination of coercion, and intellectual, moral and political persuasion. With regards the role of the state in facilitating the hegemony of the power-bloc, Poulantzas argues that the state should not be seen as a mere instrument of the

dominant class, but should rather be seen to have a 'relative autonomy' (Jessop, 1982:160). While the general function of the state is to manage class contradictions, and produce the general conditions necessary for capital accumulation in the social formation as a whole, the particular accumulation strategy being advanced at any given time may not be in the immediate or direct interests of the whole capitalist class. As opposed to the capital-theoretical school, the class-theoretical structuralists point to conflict, and competition within the capitalist class between the various fractions of capital: finance capital, industrial capital, mining capital, agricultural capital, service capital, etc. Any single accumulation strategy facilitated by the state may go against the interests of certain fractions of capital, whilst serving the interests of others. The particular accumulation strategy being facilitated by the state depends upon the balance of class forces in the social formation at that particular conjuncture (Jessop, 1982).

Historically, agrarian capital in South Africa has been an important and influential interest group. Trapido (1971) argues that for the first half of the twentieth century, the state's economic policies were dominated by the interests of agricultural and mining capital: 'the alliance between gold and maize' (cited in Hyslop, 1990:7). Morris (1976) proposed a different scenario, one in which mining capital was dominant over agrarian capital until 1924, when the coming to power of the Pact Government under Hertzog swung the balance of forces in favour of farmers (Beinart et al, 1986:15). From 1924 until the mid-1970s, and

particularly since 1948 when the Nationalist Government came to power, (white) agriculture enjoyed considerable state support. State support has taken the form of a subsidy system, price control through marketing boards, a quota system, the absence of labour legislation that could limit labour exploitation, as well as state-funded research institutes and educational facilities, and extension services. The state also pursued a policy of maximising the number of (white) farmers on the land. Cheap credit that had been introduced to win farmers' political support made investing in agriculture cheaper for individual farmers than for corporations (Cooper, 1990:343). Given the fact that commercial agriculture in South Africa was, and is, so relatively unproductive, contributing only 13% to the G.D.P. in 1946, and 5% in 1983, it follows that agriculture was given such support because white farmers were an important political power base. Indeed the National Party, after it came to power in 1948, delimited electoral constituencies in order to over-represent farmers (Cooper, 1989:20).

However, since the emergence of an economic crisis in the mid-1970s, the state has been forced to decrease agricultural support in its attempt to facilitate a new accumulation strategy (Gelb, 1991:2). The new growth model being implemented by the Nationalist Government and 'big business' - what Gelb (1991:29) calls neo-liberal export-oriented growth - focuses primarily on restructuring and regenerating the manufacturing sector, expanding markets for manufactures through export, with the emphasis being on the export of beneficiated minerals and

intermediate manufactures. The state would play a decreasing role in economic activity, allowing 'market processes' to dominate the economic sphere. Such an accumulation strategy favours the manufacturing, mining, and finance sectors of capital at the expense of most white farmers who have grown heavily dependent on state support.

Marcus (1989:25) and Cooper (1989:20) both report a decline in state support for agriculture, and predict that this support will decline further. The state today is promoting large-scale capital-intensive production, articulating the interests of larger enterprises and corporate agrarian capital. This has direct political consequences: many of the small and middle-sized farmers are leaving the National Party camp, and joining the right-wing opposition (Cooper, 1989). This is not of dire concern for the National Party: as Morris (1991:42) argues the National Party in its attempts to de-racialize political life, is creating a new social basis of support, one that incorporates the black middle-class and liberal whites into its camp, at the same time as marginalizing white right-wing elements. White farmers, today, are clearly not as important a political support base for the ruling National Party as they have been for the past forty years.

Whilst it is clear that since the mid-1970s, due to the implementation of a new accumulation strategy and changing balance of forces within the power-bloc in South Africa, the state's policy to commercial agriculture has changed, how it has

changed is less clear, and contradictory. Following the recommendations of the Marais-Du Plessis Commission of 1970, the state introduced a quota system which specified the maximum number of farmworkers who could live on any white farm. Cooper (1989:23) reports that this had the effect of ending tenancy agreements on less capitalised farms, whilst favouring more capital-intensive farmers. Such measures forced poorer 'unscientific' farmers out of agriculture, replacing them with large-scale mechanised operations. Furthermore, the government began making available to richer farmers, tax concessions and Land Bank loans (which until 1970 had been restricted to poorer farmers). This subsidization of richer farmers continued until the mid-1980s, leading to soaring interest rates, after which the state embarked on a policy of reducing agricultural subsidies in an effort to put an end to the rising agricultural debt (Cooper, 1989).

Perhaps the most important area of change with regards state policy in agriculture, has been labour legislation for farmworkers. Historically, farmworkers in South Africa have been excluded from any legislation that could qualify the conditions and terms of employment. The Labour Relations Amendment Act 51 of 1982, the Wage Act 5 of 1957, the Unemployment Insurance Act 53 of 1946, the Factories, Machinery, and Building Works Acts 22 of 1941, the Workmen's Compensation Act 30 of 1941, and the Basic Conditions of Employment Act 3 of 1983, all exclude farmworkers from their protective provisions (Hayson and Thompson, 1986:229). This reflected the powerful influence commercial farmers and

their representative association, the South African Agricultural Union (SAAU), had on the state. This meant that farmers could, and did, determine their own rates of exploitation. A report on farm service conditions released in 1982 stated, 'The only limit on how low South African farmworkers' wages can go is physical starvation' (cited in Haysom and Thompson, 1986:229).

From the mid 1970s, after the inception of a new accumulation strategy in South Africa and the consequent decline in the influence of agrarian capital within the power bloc, the situation of farmworkers came under investigation. In 1979, the Wiehahn Commission of Enquiry into Labour Relations in South Africa recommended that farmworkers be covered by basic labour legislation. The government responded in a White Paper saying that it would give attention to the Wiehahn recommendations once 'all parties' had been consulted (Haysom and Thompson, 1986:218). In 1983, the National Manpower Commission (NMC) launched a new investigation into the possibility of extending labour legislation to farmworkers. The NMC recommended that the Basic Conditions of Employment Act (BCEA) should apply to farmworkers, and the Labour Relations Act (LRA) and the Unemployment Insurance Act (UIA) should possibly be extended to farmworkers in the near future. These recommendations amounted to nothing as the NMC report was never made public (Bosch, 1991:52).

It was only in April 1990 that the NMC was once again directed by the Minister of Manpower to investigate protective legislation for farmworkers. Changes in the balance of class forces in South

Africa since the 1983 investigation, promised that this investigation would not prove to be another white elephant:

- (1) The new State President, F.W. De Klerk, had plans to improve South Africa's diplomatic relations in the international arena, with acceptable standards of labour legislation being a necessary pre-requisite.
- (2) The NMC itself was being restructured to include representatives from the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) and the National Council of Trade Unions (NACTU).
- (3) COSATU had committed itself to organising farmworkers.
- (4) Farmers were no longer the powerful interests group they had been in past decades.

The key players who were involved in negotiating the draft legislation were the South African Agricultural Union (SAAU), the trade union federations NACTU and COSATU, business representatives, the NMC Directorate, and the Department of Manpower. The response of the various parties towards the proposed legislation varied. The SAAU, despite its historic stand of opposing any labour legislation for farmworkers, initially agreed on an amended Basic Conditions of Employment Act. The reasons the SAAU gave for opposing the inclusion of

farmworkers in the Unemployment Insurance Act (UIA), the Labour Relations Act (LRA), and the Wages Act (WA) had to do with the 'close personal relationship between farmers and farmworkers', and the prevailing labour peace in the agricultural sector (Bosch, 1991:54). The other major players in the NMC, business and the labour federations, outvoted the SAAU to ensure a majority decision that all labour laws cover farmworkers, albeit some with certain amendments. In short, the NMC recommendations were as follows:

(1) The inclusion of farmworkers under the BCEA, with specific amendments for farmworkers, to take effect as soon as possible. Some of the more important amendments suggested were:

- * A forty eight hour working week, as opposed to forty six hours for other workers.
- * A nine-and-a-half hour working day, as opposed to nine-and-a-quarter for other workers.
- * The right to a minimum notice of one month instead of one or two weeks for other workers.
- * No limits on the length of meal intervals, as opposed to one-and-a-quarter hours for other workers.
- * Payment-in-kind must be considered in determining overtime, leave, and notice pay.
- * Thirty days sick leave, as opposed to thirty six hours for other workers.
- * Payment for Sunday work different than for other

workers.

- * Minimum payment of piece work to be set at the wages of permanent workers on the farm.

- (2) The inclusion of farmworkers under the UIA, the LRA, and the WA without amendments for farmworkers, but with various general amendments for all employers and workers (Bosch, 1991:86-88).

Since these recommendations were passed, however, the SAAU has backtracked, abandoning its earlier acceptance of the NMC decisions. At the SAAU's Durban conference in October 1991, the Western Cape Agricultural Union, the Transvaal Agricultural Union, and the Free State Agricultural Union supported a resolution to oppose the NMC recommendations, with the Natal Agricultural Union abstaining (Bosch, 1991:55). The main problems the SAAU had with the NMC recommendations was with the working hours, the dispute-settling mechanisms, and the proposed minimum wage in agriculture (Weekly Mail, February 28 - March 5, 1992). The SAAU called for a separate farm labour statute, a single consolidated labour bill designed 'to suit the special conditions of agriculture' (Weekly Mail, January 25 - January 31, 1993).

Bosch (1991:57) reports that the government is divided in its strategy to incorporate farmworkers into labour legislation. At one level, the Department of Manpower is attempting to get South

African labour legislation in line with I.L.O. standards. This can be seen in the department's recommended total ban on child labour, despite the NMC proposal that children be allowed to perform 'light work' (Bosch, 1991:57). At another level, the government is still clearly influenced by the SAAU. This is evidenced in its delayed implementation of the legislation proposed by the NMC. Not only has the Department of Manpower delayed implementing the NMC - proposed legislation, it has made amendments which differ substantially from the NMC recommendations. Dawie Bosch, a member of the NMC's sub-committee on farmworkers, reports that the draft legislation published at the end of December 1992 contained various concessions to the farmers' lobby (Weekly Mail, January 25 - January 31, 1993).

After more than two-and-a-half years of negotiations, the government has extended an amended BCEA to cover farmworkers, with effect from 1 May, 1993. The Act provides for:

- * A forty eight hour working week, which can be extended to fifty two hours at peak season.
- * Fourteen days' annual sick leave.
- * Thirty-six days' sick leave over a three-year cycle.
- * Regular inspections.
- * Regulated Sunday work.

(Weekly Mail, 16 April to 22 April, 1993).

Negotiations on the WA and the LRA are still continuing, with the Department of Manpower recommending that the LRA should be fully negotiated once again within NMC structures, indicating that it may still be another two years before farmworkers have the right to strike or organise. As G.Schreiner of COSATU points out, ' The process of consultation on legislation has been used to delay the process of effective awakening. This unwieldy law making process will have to be changed' (cited in Bosch, 1991:58).

The government, in tampering with the NMC recommendations, and delaying the extension of labour legislation to cover farmworkers, has in effect jeopardized the NMC process, and caused the labour federations to lose faith in the concept of negotiated labour law.

It is unclear why the government acted like it did; some commentators see its behaviour as indicative of the relative influence organized agriculture, and its representative body, the SAAU, still has over the government. Bosch (1993) suggests the government has delayed implementing the NMC recommendations 'to create the space for the SAAU leadership to save face by winning concessions on certain aspects of labour legislation' (Weekly Mail, January 25 to January 31, 1993). It could be the case that the National Party is still counting on some political support from white farmers in the forthcoming (non-racial) general elections. Another factor that the government must surely be considering, is the effect that the implementation of the WA and

LRA may have on the already fragile economy. A rise in the cost of labour power of farmworkers may lead to an increase in food prices, as well as increase unemployment in the agricultural sector, both of which could upset the fragile status quo in South Africa. Furthermore, a rise in the cost of farm labour may lead to price increases for commodities processed from agricultural goods. For example, increases in the price of cotton would surely further damage an already crippled textiles industry. The government is clearly postponing the implementation of the WA and the LRA to, in effect, make the extension of these laws to farmworkers the responsibility of the new Constituent Assembly.

What is evident when analysing the relationship between the state and agrarian capital in South Africa, is that the state is not pursuing a consistent policy or strategy. The position of the state is not transparent and clear cut. Whilst one can identify general patterns that have emerged with respect to state policy in agriculture, one cannot always determine how and why the state, and its central constituent - the government, acts as it does in particular situations. What is clear is that the state, since the mid-1970s, has attempted to facilitate a new accumulation strategy for South Africa, a strategy that is more in the interest of mining, manufacturing and finance capital than agrarian capital. Since the mid-1970s, the state has steadily reduced its support for white farmers, particularly for small and middle sized enterprises that were heavily dependent on state support. State policy in agriculture now functions more in the interests of large-scale capital intensive enterprises,

particularly corporate-owned enterprises. This state policy, however, is not uniform and free from contradictions. Whilst the state and government generally pursue economic policies that favour the new accumulation strategy (neo-liberal export-oriented growth), they also have their own political agenda, according to which they engage in sometimes contradictory tactics.

2.4 THE RESTRUCTURING PROCESS IN SOUTH AFRICAN AGRICULTURE

Marcus (1989), widely recognised as the most significant writer on the restructuring process in South African agriculture, reports that the first phase of restructuring - extending from the late 1930s to the early 1960s- was characterised by a steady process of capitalisation and mechanisation. Stavrou (1987:21) confirms this trend, noting that the rate of tractorization increased by 487.4% between 1946 and 1960. This process of capitalisation was accompanied by two fundamental changes in the labour process:

1. A change in the labour form which saw a shift away from labour tenancy towards a refined form of farm service as white farmers reduced the amount of land and number of animals permitted to tenants.
2. Fundamental changes in the social characteristics of the labour force and the division of labour that accompanied the transformation to farm service. In short, this involved the greater use of female labour and the emergence of a

skill hierarchy (Marcus, 1989:45).

The main feature of farm service was that the terms of employment presumed that the labour power of all the members of the labourer's household was always at the disposal of the farmer. Marcus (1989:51) points out that this had important implications:

1. It allowed capitalising farmers to keep a pool of surplus labour on their farms which could be utilised whenever needed. In this respect, women and children became a standard part of the irregular and seasonal labour force.
2. It weakened the workers' potential for resistance, since the action of any single worker threatened the security of his entire household. In this sense it opened the way for the farmer to engage in even more exploitative labour practices.
3. It reduced the labour costs of the farmer since this "household" labour was largely unpaid.

The second phase of restructuring in South African agriculture saw an unprecedented intensification in the levels of capitalisation in commercial agriculture. Marcus (1989) and Stavrou (1985) report that the change towards capital-intensive relations of production during this phase were accompanied by three inter-related changes:

1. Changes in Farm Size, Unit, and Area Holdings

2. Changes in the Levels of Mechanization

3. Changes in the Social Composition of the Labour Force

1. Changes in Farm Size, Unit, and Area Holdings

Stavrou (1985:8), in illustrating the trend since 1951 towards land concentration and farm unit consolidation, points out that between 1900 and 1951, the absolute number of farms in South Africa increased annually whilst the average size of farms decreased. He contrasts this pattern with that covering the second phase of restructuring in which the total number of farms decreased by 50% whilst the average farm sizes increased by over 60%. One of the reasons for this trend is put forward by Budlender (1984). She suggests that biological and technical innovations in the past three decades have resulted in the perceived need among farmers to establish larger farming units in order to achieve the acceptable economies of scale to make the purchase of such innovations cost-effective.

De Klerk (1990,1992) suggests that this trend towards land concentration and farm unit consolidation has been somewhat retarded over the past three decades by the policy of the state to keep white farmers on the land. The underlying motive behind such a policy - realized through the provision of billions of rands of state loans to white commercial farmers - had to do with furthering party-political interests (de Klerk,1992:8). This

extension of low-cost credit to farmers reached a peak in the early 1980s with farmers borrowing vast sums of money in an attempt to avoid a pending crisis caused by the drought and the declining terms of trade (de Klerk, 1990:207-213). Between 1981-1987, farmers borrowed more than R2.7 billion, an average of R1 million per recipient farmer (de Klerk, 1990:207). However, state policies in agriculture are changing. De Klerk (1992) suggests that with the unfolding democratic political dispensation in South Africa, state resources are sure to be directed away from those dependent white commercial farmers deemed to be on the brink of insolvency. This could mean that up to 40% of all commercial summer crop producers will not survive (de Klerk, 1990:207). Grain, wheat and maize farmers are simply going to have to make the transition to mixed crop/livestock production or go under (de Klerk, 1992:9). Such a process is sure to hasten the emerging trend towards monopoly capitalism in agriculture as ownership of farm units becomes concentrated in the hands of fewer individuals, companies and corporations.

2. Changes in Levels of Mechanization

Whereas in the first phase of restructuring, the relations of production in commercial agriculture in South Africa were generally conceived of as being labour-intensive, the second phase of restructuring was definitely characterised by capital-intensive relations of production (Marcus, 1989). The second phase of restructuring saw an acceleration in the rate of accumulation


and mechanization which lasted until the mid-1980s. Stavrou (1985:21) reports a 264% increase in the use of tractors and lorries between 1950 and 1980, and a 86% increase in the use of harvesters between 1965 and 1980. The increased level of mechanization in the cultivation and harvesting of crops was accompanied by an increase in the use of minerals and fertilizers as well as the expansion of irrigated and drained areas (Stavrou,1985:15). The total amount of land under cultivation increased significantly during this period, enabling farmers to achieve higher economies of scale and thereby lower the average costs of production.

The increased levels of mechanization led to important changes production patterns and the demand for labour. Stavrou (1985) argues that whilst the increased mechanization did not result in a vast reduction in the total number of workers employed, general changes have occurred in the division of labour. In other words, whilst farmers have yet to significantly rationalize in terms of the size of their labour force, increased levels of mechanization have necessitated the employment of more highly skilled and responsible workers. This has led to the establishment of a clearly identifiable hierarchial skill structure in the agrarian labour force during this second phase of restructuring (Stavrou 1985, Marcus 1989).

3. Changes in the Social Composition of the Labour Force

Marcus (1989) provides a detailed analysis of the reshaping of

the division of labour during the second phase of restructuring. A reduction in on-farm employment was accompanied by a simultaneous increase in the use of seasonal and part-time labour. To meet these needs, farmers made increased use of migrant workers, recruited as single labour units from labour pools in towns or in the reserves, as well as female and child labour recruited from the family of the contracted male labourer (Marcus, 1989:90-114). With regards the feminisation of the agricultural labour force, Marcus (1989:101) reports that the employment of coloured women workers in the Western Cape grew by 143% between 1970 and 1980.



This second phase of restructuring was also characterised by a trend towards categorising the labour force into a hierarchy of skills which was reflected in a differentiated wage structure. However, Marcus (1989) reports that despite the recognition among farmers of the need for a more highly skilled labour force, farmers have been generally unwilling to train workers and pay for their skills. To substantiate this point, Marcus (1989:116) cites the example that in 1982 only 5.5% of tractor operators in South Africa had been formally trained. The acknowledgement of skills has remained the prerogative of the farmer, with this acknowledgement of skills not being applied to all workers equally. Marcus points out that in many cases only the skills of full-time male workers were acknowledged. Marcus (1989:122) argues that the social differentiation of the workforce and the emergence of a skills hierarchy that occurred during this second phase of restructuring contained within it the seeds of division

within the agricultural workforce, and in this respect has functioned clearly in the interests of white farm management.

Creating even more significant divisions in the agricultural workforce are the changes that have occurred in the authority structure within farming enterprises during this second phase of restructuring. The tendency has been for farmworkers to be co-opted to do most of the first-line supervision of workers (Marcus, 1989:119). This tendency began on the company-owned estates managed as agribusinesses, but has increasingly spread to most of the privately-owned farms as well. In most cases supervisors (otherwise known as boss-boys or indunas) were chosen from the male, on-farm, regular workforce on the basis of their record of responsibility, reliability and loyalty, and their willingness to ensure the welfare of the farm (Marcus, 1989:119-120). Consequently, qualifications acquired through formal educational structures were not perceived by the farmer as basic requirements for the job, and as a result very little formal training of supervisors has taken place. In short, the job description of supervisors is two-fold: enforcing discipline, and keeping the farmer informed about the workers. In this sense, a sharp correlation has existed between supervisor and informer (Marcus, 1989:120). As with the emergence of the skills hierarchy, the development of an authority hierarchy among the agricultural workforce is clearly in the interests of the farmer.

2.5 RESTRUCTURING ON WINE FARMS IN THE WESTERN CAPE

Capitalist agricultural production on the wine farms in the Western Cape has undergone a process of restructuring in the past two decades, a process that is still to reach its climax in years to come. This process of modernization and rationalization cannot be separated from the general process of restructuring that has transformed South African agriculture since the mid-1970s. As has been argued, this restructuring process has been associated with three related trends:

1. The concentration and centralization of capital
2. Mechanization
3. The changing nature of labour control (Stavrou, 1987; Marcus, 1989)

These processes, however, have been realised with varying form and intensity, due to historical, socio-economic, and regional factors, as well as the nature of the agricultural enterprise itself. With regards wine farming in the Western Cape, major changes have not occurred with respect to the concentration and centralisation of capital. The co-operative movement has enabled small-scale and poorer farmers who could not afford to produce their own wine, to stay in the wine-farming business. This is not to say that monopolisation does not occur; it rather occurs at a far slower rate than other agricultural sectors because the advantages of economies of scale are not as evident in wine

farming. Furthermore, whilst the level of mechanisation has increased on wine farms in the Western Cape (Scharf, 1984; Groenewald and Lubbe, 1985), wine farming remains characterised by a labour-intensive production process, hence the level of mechanisation and its consequent deskilling and retrenching of workers remains minimal in comparison to capital-intensive production processes such as maize farming. It is the third aspect of the restructuring process, the changing nature of labour control, that is particularly significant for wine farming, and will hence be the focus of the discussion.

Before the changes that have taken place in the nature of labour control are analyzed, the social forces and motivations behind these changes will be contextualized. Contrary to the rest of white commercial agriculture in South Africa in the mid-1960s and early 1970s, which had an over-supply of African farm labour, leading the state to implement a removals policy in which 'excess' farm labourers and their families were forced into designated homelands (Stavrou, 1987:5), wine and fruit farmers in the Western Cape were experiencing a labour shortage (Carinus, 1978:3). The roots of this phenomenon date back to 1955, when Dr WW Eiselen, Secretary for Native Affairs, first expounded the "coloured labour preference policy". Vigorously implemented from the mid-1960s, this policy called for coloured workers to be given employment preference over African workers in certain areas of the Western Cape (Marcus, 1989:86). Unlike Africans, these coloured workers employed by farmers in the Western Cape were not prevented by influx control from seeking alternative employment

in urban areas. Working on farms in the Western Cape had unattractive connotations for both the urban and rural coloured working class. Scharf (1984:156) reported that farm labour was perceived as low paid, dead-end, degrading work, whilst Carinus (1978:8) pointed out that farm labour was considered 'the lowest form of labour that only the stupidest members of the community are involved in'. Scharf (1984:176) reported that research on school-going children of farm workers in the Western Cape in the early 1980s found that none of the boys interviewed wanted to work on farms when they grew up. The reasons they gave included:

1. low wages;
2. that farmers 'druk die mense af' [farmers oppress people];
3. work is boring;
4. the likelihood that they will abuse alcohol;
5. there remained little scope for advancement.

By the late 1970s and early 1980s, most of the farmers in the Stellenbosch - Somerset West areas who employed what Scharf (1984) calls 'coercive control measures', experienced a shortage of regular coloured labour. Competition from the urban labour market was too strong a pull-factor with farms losing their most productive workers to urban based industry. Carinus (1978:3) noted that due to the limited prospects for job enrichment on the wine and fruit farms in the W. Cape in the 1970s, workers with the least potential for upward mobility were remaining on the farms. This was one of the contributing factors to the farmers'

perception of the farm labourer as 'unreliable, irresponsible, and disloyal'. High maintenance costs of machinery and implements were associated with these farmworkers (Carinus, 1978:2).

Furthermore, the onset of an economic crisis in South Africa in the mid-1970s saw the financial rand devalue, which meant increasing costs for imported machinery. An added burden for farmers was the increased pressure for sanctions in the late 1970s and 1980s, leading to a loss of strategic export markets for wine farmers. In an effort to remain profitable, many wine farmers and their representative organisations, such as the Boland Agricultural Union, and the Western Cape Agricultural Union, began articulating an ideology which called for the rationalization and modernization of the wine-farming industry. The effects on labour relations were tremendous.

The fundamental changes in labour relations facilitated what Scharf (1984) calls the change from coercive labour control to co-optive techniques of labour management. The essence of coercive labour control is to keep the farm labour force 'occupationally and spatially immobile, unorganised, underemployed, dependent, under-skilled, and poor' (Scharf, 1984:149). Central to coercive labour control was the tot-system which effectively served to immobilise the labour force, manifesting a tacit acceptance of the inadequate working and living conditions. An additional means to immobilise workers

was through extending credit to workers, forcing them to remain on the farm to repay their debts. However, despite these attempts by farmers to keep farm-workers on the farms, labour turnover remained high, as workers increasingly moved to the urban centres in search of better employment opportunities. Job satisfaction on coercively managed farms was extremely low : Groenewald and Lubbe (1985 : 50) found in their 1984 survey, that only 2% of the 522 farmworkers interviewed were satisfied with their present lives. Farmers became increasingly concerned with their labour relations approaches as they realized that their ultimate mechanism, 'huis leegmaak' [dismissal], was becoming less viable in the context of an increasing shortage of labour supply.

The Rural Foundation played a central role in the transformation of labour relations on the wine and fruit farms in the Western Cape. Registered as a utility company in December 1982, the Rural Foundation aims to involve organised agriculture and the private and public sectors in the advancement of rural community development, and to improve the quality of life and living standards of approximately seven million people on farms in South Africa (Rural Foundation Annual Report, 1989). The Rural Foundation is a non-profit, non-political organisation that is funded by both the public and private sectors: in 1987 the Rural Foundation received 10% of its funding from institutions in the private sector, 25% of its funding from farmers, and 65% from the state; in 1990 state funding had dropped to 50% with greater contributions given by the private sector (Gregorowski, Inside South Africa, 1987:15; interview with James Lamprecht

{13/11/1989}). According to Gregorowski, the Rural Foundation was established by organised agriculture in an effort to support farmers in their complex and widely encompassing task of managing his ground, capital, and employees in a manner that is economically viable, as well as undertake the role of surrogate doctor, teacher, keeper of the peace, builder, shopkeeper, and sports organiser. The Rural Foundation maintains links with organised agriculture through the Association for the Co-ordination of Training in RSA Agriculture, as well as through having personnel on the Manpower Committees of the provincial agricultural unions affiliated to the SAAU (Rural Foundation Annual Report, 1989). Apart from this specifically agricultural agenda, the Rural Foundation initiative can also be seen to be part of the former Minister of Health and Welfare, Dr C.V. van der Merwe's National Community Development Strategy (Skalnik, 1985).

The Rural Foundation development process works in three domains:

1) working life, (2) management life, (3) social life

(Rural Foundation, Annual Report, 1989). The practical projects in the first domain, working life, include training in skills, courses for supervisors, the 6M training course, and courses in personnel management and labour relations. According to James Lamprecht of the Rural Foundation, the aim of the labour relations course is to give farmers as much information and knowledge as they need to help them with their labour relations

on their farms. Included in the course are subjects such as: Approach by a Labour Union, Fairness in Labour Relations, Labour Unions in Agriculture, Labour Relations: The Future. Use is made of Prof De Villiers' 'Labour Relations in Primary Agriculture' (1990) which was written on request for, and published by, the South African Agricultural Union, with copies being sent to Rural Foundation members to facilitate the implementation of fair labour relations. The perspective of the document is clear, recommending to farmers that 'they refuse access to trade unions since the trade union has no legal grounds for insisting on such access' (de Villiers, 1989:20). However, the labour relations consultant for the Rural Foundation, James Lamprecht claims that the Rural Foundation is 'totally neutral. We are not for or against trade unions because we represent both parties - farmers and workers' (interview, 3/11/1989). Apart from disseminating information advising farmers/farm managers on their labour relations strategies, the Rural Foundation also helps its members with the practical implementation of structures such as liaison committees, grievance procedures, and disciplinary procedures. With regards the liaison committees, James Lamprecht points out that these take many forms on the wine farms in the Western Cape: 'We have some committees that really bargain with farmers, others that function as consulting mechanisms, and others that are just instruments for the use of the farmer' (interview 13/11/1989). It must be pointed out that these categories suggested by James Lamprecht are misleading in that while it is true that liaison committees on different farms benefit workers in varying degrees, all liaison committees operate, in the last instance, as

instruments for the use of the farmer. All decisions made by the committees are done so within the ambit of the farmer/farm managers' sanction.

The 6M Simulation Programme has as its aim the dissemination, to employees, of information about the 'business world' in which the farm is required to function. The course teaches workers:

- (1) How the farm functions,
- (2) The farm's role and objectives,
- (3) How the market functions, and the role of competitors,
- (4) Concepts such as profit and loss, and the implications for the farm,
- (5) How workers can contribute towards the farm's objectives,
- (6) The role of management in ensuring that the farm functions effectively. Here it is important to eliminate misconceptions which the employees have about management, for example, that the owner uses all of the profit for his personal use, and
- (7) How company resources such as people, materials, and equipment can be effectively utilized (Chamberlain, Effective Farming, May 1990: 243).

With regards the third area of the Rural Foundation development strategy, namely Social Life programmes, James Lamprecht points out that these programmes focus on, and benefit the employee. This contrasts to the Management Life programmes, which are meant

for the employer, and the Working Life programmes which benefit both the employer and employee: 'If you train the farmer in labour relations, the benefits will accrue to the farmworker' (interview J. Lamprecht, 13/11/1989). The Social Life programmes include: the upgrading of physical facilities for workers, health projects, education projects, leadership development, and leisure (Rural Foundation Annual Report 1989).

It is obvious that the Rural Foundation has played a central role in helping wine farmers in the Western Cape make the transition from coercive labour control to more co-optive methods. Wine farmers are increasingly recognising the benefits of co-optive labour control methods, and increasingly joining the Rural Foundation. However, it must be pointed out that many wine farms in the Western Cape have undertaken similar changes on their farms without the help of the Rural Foundation.²

The benefits of co-optive methods of labour exploitation can be summarized as follows:

- (1) As was mentioned earlier, one of the central motivations that drove many farmers to rethink their labour relations techniques was a labour shortage. Wine farmers showed a marked preference for employing coloured labourers to work with the vines and in the cellars, and in the 1970s and 1980s began experiencing acute shortages of supplies of coloured labour. Co-optive management techniques succeeded

² Farms A, D and I are examples of such farms.

in securing for wine farmers the labour they needed. With the improved living and working conditions on many wine farms, and the consequent weakening of the pull to urban areas, there has been a voluntary return of coloured labour to farming (Gregorowski, Inside South Africa, 1987:15). The smaller, more highly skilled, more disciplined, and more satisfied labour force that characterises co-actively managed farms, is in effect, a more stable labour force with a substantial decrease in labour turnover reported, either through dismissals, or through labourers leaving of their own will .

(2) Farmers, as well as observers such as the Rural Foundation's Community Development Officer for Stellenbosch, Andre Lyker, report marked improvements in the quality of labour working on co-actively managed farms. Workers were perceived as being more disciplined and responsible, needing less supervision than workers on coercively managed farms. Furthermore, supervisors tended to be increasingly selected from amongst the ranks of the workers themselves, often being sent on training courses either with the Rural Foundation, or with the Kromme Rhee Training Centre. This enabled the farmer/farm manager to devote more time to the other aspects of the farming business, such as marketing (interview, Andre Lyker, 13/11/1989).

(3) Farms that adopted co-optimative management techniques reported

a substantial decrease in absenteeism (Chamberlain, Effective Farming, May 1990:243).

- (4) Notable savings in material handling costs were also recorded on farms that had changed their labour relations techniques (Ibid).
- (5) With a more highly educated and skilled labour force, together with a more 'caring' farmer, less accidents generally occurred on co-optimally managed farms (interview Andre Lyker, 13/11/1989).
- (6) Farms that had improved the living and working life of their labour force found that workers performed their work more efficiently, with farm productivity improving. As Bosman (1983:4) comments, 'The Stellenbosch farmer, who with heart and soul, has thrown himself into the development ideal, documents among other things, that where his uninvolved neighbour must use three workers, he uses only one, so that he can pay his worker twice more than what the neighbour's earns, while he himself can put the wages of the third worker into his own pocket' (cited in Skalnik, 1985:9). This was all the more important since labour costs were the largest single item in the budget of the W. Cape farmer (Bosman, 1983:4 cited in Skalnik, 1985:9). Bronaar Farms (Pty) Ltd., a fruit farm in Elgin, after joining the Rural Foundation, improving worker living and working conditions, and sending the workers on a 6M Simulation

Course, recorded a saving of R190 000 on the previous budget. Of this amount, 10% was passed on to the workforce as a bonus (Chamberlain, Effective Farming, May 1990: 243).

(7) The 1980s saw the socio-political climate of the rural Western Cape changing, particularly around urban centres such as Stellenbosch. The Stellenbosch Advice Office, as well as FAWU's Farm Workers Project became active in the Stellenbosch area. Talk of trade unions making an impact on agriculture in the 1990s was rife among the interviewees. Many farmers/farm managers hoped that they could win the loyalty and allegiances of farmworkers before unions began requesting recognition agreements. Mr. P. Meyer (Labour Party M.P. for Vredendal) articulates this mode of thinking very clearly in a sitting of the House of Representatives: Mr. Meyer was asking the House of Representatives for funding for the Rural Foundation, arguing that the 'proper organisation of farmworkers through activities such as the Rural Foundation was promoting, would prevent radical trade unions from disrupting production as they had done on the mines' (Cape Times, 1/9/1987).

(8) Changes in the balance of class forces in South Africa in the early 1980s had resulted in the government making a commitment to extend labour legislation to cover farmworkers. Through upgrading the living and working conditions of their labour force, many farmers have

pre-empted this legislation, getting their 'house in order' before they were forced to by law.

(9) Scharf (1984:152) reported that changing social and economic conditions in the rural Western Cape had led to a decrease in the tot-system in the 1970s and 1980s. Of particular significance here was the co-operative movement which led to far fewer farmers producing their own wine. X

(10) The wine industry has always been particularly reliant on the export market, given the low levels of the wine consumption of South Africans. Sanctions, gaining momentum in the late 1970s and 1980s, led to overseas boycotts of South African wines. With the prospect of declining sanctions in the early 1990s, many wine estates and co-operatives attempted to regain credibility with overseas consumers, disseminating the idea that they should not be associated with the labour control practices of apartheid South Africa. The KWV initiative in April 1992 to protect workers' rights by enforcing a Manpower Code for KWV cellars, and allowing individual wine producers to be incorporated within this code, can be seen to be part of the marketing drive to change overseas consumers' perceptions of the exploitative production process that has been associated with South African wine (The Argus, 15 April 1992). More recently a 'Fair Trade' mark has been implemented to designate 'politically correct wine', i.e. wine from an estate 'where workers enjoy an income and X

working conditions which at least meet minimum acceptable standards' (Weekly Mail, May 713, 1993). Farmers/farm managers are becoming increasingly aware that wine produced on a farm associated with coercive labour practices, could, at worst, be targeted by overseas anti-apartheid lobbies, or potentially avoided on the shelves by 'politically correct' consumers.

The benefits of co-optive management techniques for farmers/owners of wine farms in the Western Cape are indeed many, with the result being that many of the wine farms in the Western Cape have made, or are making the transition. Groenewald and Lubbe (1986:iii) argue that wine farmers in the Western Cape simply have to make this transition. They point out that the current modernization of agriculture requires as its basic prerequisite, that 'farmers change in management style and technique ... to manage manpower resources according to more or less universalistic principles which stress acceptable practices of personnel management'. The trend toward co-optive methods of labour control can be visibly observed in the Stellenbosch area.

Thus far, the discussion has been built around the objective changes that are taking place on wine farms in the Western Cape: the underlying forces motivating farmers to change, the Rural Foundation as a catalyst in this process of change, and the benefits of co-optive management techniques (for farmers/farm managers/owners). The question remains however, as to how the

transformation to co-optive forms of labour control are being articulated and interpreted in practice. To understand how both farmers and farmworkers are experiencing these changes, one needs to examine how the relations of production on wine farms in the Western Cape have changed. Researchers such as Scharf (1984), Skalnik (1985), Groenewald and Lubbe (1984, 1986), van Ryneveld (1986), Mayson (1986), Schoeman (1988), Hamman (1989), and Du Toit (1991) all analyze the relations of production on coercively managed wine farms in the Western Cape as being characterized by paternalism. Paternalism has the following features:

1. It depends upon differential access to power and resources: the subordinate is unable to command sufficient resources to support himself/herself, but must depend upon the paternalist.
2. There is an ideological dimension that justifies subordination, emphasising the caring role of the paternalist.
3. It is a collective form of social organisation: the paternalist may be a single person, but his subordinates are treated collectively.
4. Paternalism is typically a diffuse relationship which covers all aspects of subordinates' lives, which deals with the whole person rather than confining itself to specific activities.

Paternalism differs from conventional capitalist relations in that:

- (a) it assumes inequality of power, whereas the formal ideology of capitalism is that economic exchanges are contracts between equals.
- (b) the diffuse involvement of subordinates contrasts with the typical capitalist employment relationship based on segmental involvement of employees and the separation of work and non-work life, where the cash nexus may be the only tie binding employers and employees (Abercrombie et al, 1984:180).

With the paternalistic relationship on coercively managed farms, the farmer has total control, leading some scholars such as Nasson (1984) to describe the farm as a 'total institution'. Goffman (1961, cited in Abercrombie, 1984:254) defines a 'total institution' as 'a place of residence and work where a large number of like-situated individuals, cut-off from the wider society for an appreciable period of time, together lead an enclosed, formally administered round of life'. In such a framework, workers are portrayed as totally dependent and powerless, duped by their own articulation of paternalism, i.e. their conception of their rights, obligations, and duties as well as what favours the farmer will grant in return. The farmer has

absolute power, defining the parameters of the discourse of 'mutual obligation'. Any attempts by workers to break free from this discourse would render them no longer 'deel van die plaas' [part of the farm], in other words it would remove from them the fabric of their social identities (du Toit, 1991).

With the change from coercive to co-optive forms of labour control, a marked change has occurred in how workers and farmers/farm managers conceptualize their relationship. However the paternalistic relationship between farmers/farm managers and workers has not disappeared. Contrary to James Lamprecht's claim that those farmers who have joined the Rural Foundation have done away with paternalism (interview 13/11/1989), researchers such as Skalnik (1985) and du Toit (1991) argue that paternalism, albeit in a different form, is still very dominant on those farms that have made the transition to co-optive management techniques. A new form of paternalism has emerged, what du Toit calls 'enlightened paternalism'. A new discourse has been articulated, with key concepts being trust, responsibility, and communication.

In this new language of paternalism, farmers/managers and workers must trust each other, and communicate with each other in order to facilitate their responsibility to the farm. The concept of the farm takes on a new meaning in 'enlightened' paternalist discourse. Workers no longer work for the farmer, they work for the farm. As du Toit (1991:7) notes, 'The person of the manager or farmer is divorced from his managerial role. In a sense, it is not the manager who makes decisions on the farm, but the

impersonal imperatives of farm management themselves'.

CHAPTER 3

RESTRUCTURING IN WINE FARMING: THE CASE OF KOELENHOF

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter will contextualize the restructuring process in wine farming by means of a case study of nine farms in Koelenhof, an area lying just outside Stellenbosch. Much of the factual information is conveyed by way of tables, whilst the farmers'/farm managers' attitudes to topics related to the restructuring process will be elaborated in detail.

TABLE A

FARM	A	B	C	D
Unit of ownership	Company	Family	Family	Family
Duration of ownership	6 years	44 years	3.5 years	7 years
Any other farms owned?	No	No	No	No
Farm size	178 hectares	360 hectares	70 hectares	80 hectares
Size of farm used to produce grapes for wine	40 hectares	220 hectares	50 hectares	30 hectares
Other crops/fruit/livestock farmed	Sheep	Plums, Pears, canning peaches (55 hectares)	Plums (4 hectares)	Pears, Plums (10 hectares)
Size of work force	14 workers	168 workers	11 families \pm 20 workers)	9 families 18 workers
Does the farm employ temporary labour?	No	30-7 workers during the harvest from Khayelitsha (Africans), and Kraaifontein and Scottsdean (coloureds)	Very occasionally during the harvest \pm 10 workers	10-15 workers from Klapmuts and Khayelitsha during the harvest
Is the farm a Rural Foundation Farm?	No	Yes	Yes	No
Wine production	The farm produces 30% of its own wine (bottled by SFW). The rest is sent to Bottelary Co-op	The farm produces its own wine with 100% of the harvest.	The farm sends its harvest to the Nederburg Co-op.	The farm sends its entire harvest to the Koelenhof Co-op

TABLE A (continued)

E	F	G	H	I
Family	Company	State	Family	Family
26 years	43 years	Uncertain	70 years	4 years
No	No	Yes	No	No
127 hectares	150 hectares	191 hectares	140 hectares	84 hectares
65 hectares	80 hectares	32 hectares	100 hectares	45 hectares
Export Pears (8 hectares)	70 000 hens 130 sows 500 sheep	Cattle (dairy) Fruit Vegetables	-	Export Pears Plums (6 hectares)
10 families 16 workers	60 workers	33 workers (26 males + 7 females)	15 families 25 workers	13 workers
14 workers	25 workers	4 men	25 workers	10 workers
A few (\pm 10) from around Stellenbosch during harvest	35-50 from Khayelitsha during harvest	No	10-15 from Klapmuts during harvest	A few (\pm 10) from Klamputs during harvest
Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
The farm produces 6 to 7% of its own wine - the rest is sent to Fleur de Cap Co- op.	The entire harvest is sent to SFW.	The entire harvest is sent to Koelenhof Co- op.	The farm produces its own wine with 100% of the harvest	The entire harvest is sent to SFW.

FARM PROFILE (continued)

All in all, nine wine farms in Koelenhof were studied. In many respects, these farms represented a diverse demographic and social composition. Of these farms, two farms were company-owned, one state-owned, and the rest family estates. Besides the state, none of the other owners owned any other farms. The purchase of the farms was either very recent (within the past seven years) -

Farms A,C,D,and I - or else had stayed within the family/company for more than one generation: Farms B,F and H had been in the family/company for more than 25 years. Six of the farms in the sample were affiliated to the Rural Foundation (Farms B,C,E,F,G,and H), whilst Farms A,D, and H were not.

Farm size ranged from 70 hectares to 360 hectares, whilst the amount of land under cultivation with grapes ranged from 30 hectares to 220 hectares. The mean average farm size was 139.2 hectares whilst the mean average size of land under cultivation with grapes was 66.3 hectares. Besides Farm H, all the other farms cultivated fruit other than grapes or farmed livestock.

The size of the workforce ranged from 13 workers on the smallest farm (Farm I), to 168 workers on the largest (Farm B). The average size of the workforce on the farms studied was 26.8. Seven of the nine farms employed temporary labour during the harvest season; only Farms A and G did not employ seasonal labour. The specific details of the regular and seasonal labourforce on the nine farms in Koelenhof will be outlined in the following sub-section: The Division of Labour.

Only two of the farms in the study made their own wine with their entire harvest. These farms -Farms B and H- were the two largest farms in the study, and were also the two farms that had been owned by their respective company and family for the longest duration. In this sense these two farms were definitely the two most established estates in the study. Of the other farms, only Farm A produced its own wine with some of its harvest (30%). All the other farms sent their entire harvests to various co-operatives to be made into wine. The specific details of the wine production and distribution undertaken by the different farms in the study can be found in the sub-section: The Production,Marketing, and Distribution of Wine.

3.3 THE DIVISION OF LABOUR

Table B: Hectares under grapes per worker in vineyard or cellar work.¹

Farm A	3.07
Farm B	1.83
Farm C	2.5
Farm D	3
Farm E	3.6
Farm F	3.2
Farm G	8
Farm H	4
Farm I	4.3

0.23.

¹ It should be noted that Farms A,B, E and H employed workers who worked in the cellars. These workers are included in the ratio.

The average size of the workforce who worked with grapes and in the cellars on the farms in Koelenhof was 26.8. This, however, cannot be seen to be a true reflection of actual practices, as the average has been inflated by the size of the workforce of Farm B. Indeed, five of the nine farms studied had a workforce of less than twenty workers. A more realistic way to look at the labour needs of wine farms would be to calculate the mean average ratio of worker to size of cultivated land (grapes), this ratio being 1:3.83 (see Table B for specific detail of each farm). By farming standards in South Africa, it can be concluded that the farming of grapes for wine in Koelenhof is labour intensive.

With regards the racial composition of the workforce employed in the vineyards and in the cellars, all nine farms employed coloured men, women, and youths. All the interviewees indicated a clear preference for employing coloured workers. Farmer B, for example, argued that while African labour would certainly be cheaper, coloureds tended to work much better with the vines, than Africans. 'The job is very new to them [Africans] I think'. On Farm F, where the dominant part of the farming enterprise was the farming of livestock (pigs, chicken, sheep), a clear division of labour was evident between coloured and African workers. The coloured workers were employed to work in the vineyards, while African workers worked with the animals: 'they work better with the animals you know' (Farmer F). African workers were employed to work with the vines on certain farms during the harvest season (February and March) when farmers/managers employed African workers on a piece-work basis.

A clear gender based division of labour was also evident on the farms in Koelenhof. Gender inequalities existed particularly in the distribution of skill and authority, women generally being less skilled than men, with no women occupying positions of authority such as foreman, assistant foreman, or 'spanleier' [team leader] on the nine farms studied. Women tended to be employed on a piece-work basis, earning an average of R10 per day pre-cutting, tying the shoots, harvesting, or working in the cellar, bottling, packing and labelling wine. Pruning was generally reserved for men, being perceived by the farmers/managers as more highly skilled work. ** In my interview, pruning done by female workers*

With respect to the distribution of skill and authority, the pattern on all nine farms was notably consistent. All farms had a white farmer/farm manager who oversaw the day-to-day functioning of the farm, and the cellar (should there be one). On four of the nine farms, this function was carried out by the owner of the farm (Farms B, D, E, and F), while for the other five farms this function was performed by farm managers. Some farms, such as Farm E and Farm H employed (white) managers to assist the farmer in managing the farm.

Eight of the nine farms employed at least one coloured foreman. In short the job description of the foreman is to liaise closely with the farmer/farm manager at least once a week to decide what work needs to be done, and how it is to be done. 'They (the foremen) must make sure that the job gets done. They must keep an eye on their workers and check on their guys' ability to do the

work. Together we decide on the job to be done, and he (the foreman) divides it out to the workers' (Farm Manager H). Foremen were also responsible for policing workers after working hours in their leisure time. As Farm Manager A commented, 'If one [worker] drinks or behaves badly, he comes and tells me. There's two or three workers who don't like him for that, but these workers will go in time. The others all respect him — they know if they do something wrong, it's the right thing for him to tell me'. On Farms A and D, namely those farms without liaison committees, foremen had the added responsibility of liaising between the workers and the farmer/farm manager. As Farm Manager A points out, 'Only if he [the foreman] can't solve the problem [of the worker] will workers come directly to me. This doesn't happen very often'.

Foremen tended to be the most highly skilled and highly paid of the labourers, earning between R300 and R600 per month. Most had been employed by the farmer/farm manager for a relatively long duration, climbing the occupational status hierarchy from pruner, to 'spanleier', or assistant foreman, to foreman. More than half of the foremen employed on the farms in the study had attended training courses organised through the Rural Foundation, or at the Kromme Rhee Training Centre. Farms with cellars, such as Farms A, B, and H, also employed at least one foreman to oversee operations in the cellar. The number of foremen employed generally depended on the number of workers that needed to be supervised. Farm B, for example, employed five foremen, three to work on the farm, and two in the cellar. The larger farms, such

as Farms B and H, also employed 'spanleiers' and assistant foremen to supervise specific operations on the farm, such as pruning, or harvesting. These workers can be seen to be next in line in the occupational status hierarchy on the wine farms in Koelenhof.

The third category in the occupational hierarchy were the licensed tractor drivers, the licensed lorry drivers, and the unlicensed tractor drivers. All farms employed at least two tractor drivers; on smaller farms these tractor drivers also drove trucks to deliver grapes to the co-ops, and even worked with the vines, for example, pruning. The tractor drivers and the truck drivers earned between R250 and R450 per month.

The next category was that of the male farmworkers, skilled in working with vines, although generally categorized as unskilled. Two farms, Farm B and Farm H, differentiated between 'junior' and 'senior' workers (based on the Patterson Model), with 'senior' workers having more experience and therefore being more highly remunerated. Most of the workers in this category had informal on-the-job training in pruning, pre-cutting, tying the shoots, picking etc. One farm, Farm H had sent its workers on a formal training course, the 6 M Simulation Course, with the Rural Foundation. The vineyard workers on the farms studied earned between R150 and R400 per month.

The fifth category was that of the female vineyard and cellar workers. Generally, these women were less skilled in working with the vines, than the men, although some were relatively skilled cellar workers. Where women did work with the vines, they were used primarily for tying up the shoots, and for picking grapes during harvest season. Women were paid a weekly/monthly salary on only four of the nine farms in the study earning between R100 and R170 per month; on the majority of the farms, women were paid on a piece-work basis, earning on average R10 per day. Male and female youths between the ages of 14 and 18 years, were also employed on a piece-work basis on many of the farms, particularly during harvest, also earning approximately R10 per day.

The final category of workers employed by the farmers/farm managers in Koelenhof were those workers referred to as seasonal workers. These workers did not reside permanently on the farms, but were employed at certain times of the year, particularly harvest season, on a piece-work basis, to supplement the permanent work force with the heavy work load. Seven of the nine farms employed temporary labour for the two to three months during harvest season, with only Farm A and Farm G not conforming to this trend. Farm G had relatively small vineyards, and could draw on the labourers who worked with the cattle, fruit, and vegetables. Farm Manager A refused to employ temporary labourers arguing that 'they don't care for your vines. Another thing is it tends to bring down the standards of your workers when they mix with workers of a lower standard. They've got bad habits like drinking ...' During harvest, Farm A made use of the wives and

teenage children of the male workers to cope with the burden of harvest. The farmers/farm managers of all the other farms reported a general decrease in the use of temporary labour over the past few years. Farm Manager H attributed the decrease in the use of temporary labour on his farm to the desire of the permanent work force to do the work themselves, and hence 'keep the money on the farm'. The number of temporary workers employed ranged between 10 and 70, depending on the size of the farm. Both African workers (from Khayelitsha and Klapmuts) and coloured workers (from Klapmuts, Scottsdean, Stellenbosch, and Kraaifontein) were employed (see Table A for specific details).

3.4 THE PRODUCTION, MARKETING AND DISTRIBUTION OF WINE

Four of the nine farms made their own wine. Farms B and H used their whole crop for the making of wine which they bottled and distributed themselves. The distribution of the bottled wine was performed by agents in South Africa, and overseas. Approximately 90% of the wine produced by Farm B was sold locally, whilst 10% was exported. Farm H exported only 5% of its wine. Both Farmer B and Farm manager H reported that the overseas demand for wine was changing dramatically with both farms planning to export at least 20% of their wines the following year [1991]. Farm A, which processed 30% of its harvested crop into wine, sending the remaining 70% of the crop to a cooperative, exported 30% of the wine it produced. By 1992, the farm manager was planning to process the entire crop into wine in their own cellar, exporting 50% of this wine. Farm E, which produced and bottled wine with

5% to 7% of its crop, marketed and sold its wine locally, the reason for this being that it did not produce enough wine to export. The farmer pointed out that this would change in the next few years, as the farm began increasing the size of the cellars and producing more of its own wine. Farmers/farm managers who delivered their grapes to cooperatives (see details in Table A) were unsure of the proportion of wine that was exported. Farm Manager C, who supplied Nederburg Co-operative, pointed out that the co-operative could not even meet the local demand for red wines, and therefore could not really consider the export market.

The tendency of Farmer E and Farm Manager A, to rely less on co-operatives, and to rather produce more of their own wine with their crop, can be seen to reflect the general optimism of wine farmers in Koelenhof with respect to both the local and export markets. Four of the nine interviewees spoke of a potential local market in the burgeoning black middle class. 'Soon black people will start drinking wine, then we won't have enough wine, even to supply the local market' (Farm Manager H). Farmer E pointed out that the opposite was true for the coloured middle class, 'The first thing the coloured does when he identifies with the middle class is he gives up wine ... it's associated with slavery and the working class. We have to take this into account with our marketing and promotion'. This farmer expressed certain reservations about the local market, 'The thing with South Africans is that they don't drink enough wine. The average consumption in South Africa is 6 litres per head, whereas in

Italy it is 144 litres per head. It is a cultural problem but things are changing'.

With regard the export market, all nine farmers noted that the market was 'opening up' with sanctions losing their impetus. According to Farmer B, the decline in sanctions was particularly significant for the wine industry that produced a 50% surplus. Markets in Great Britain and Canada in particular, were seen as viable options. Farmer B pointed out that although the demise of sanctions meant that South African wines could be sold 'above the counter', South African farmers still had to shake off the image of being oppressors who overly exploited their workers. This farmer suggested the implementation of a code or trade mark for wines from an estate where remuneration and working conditions were 'acceptable'.² Farmer E saw the biggest danger facing the export market as not being the anti-apartheid attitudes of the overseas consumers, but rather the oversaturation of the overseas market with poor quality South African wine. He explained that good quality wine (particularly red wine) could not meet the local demand, so it was generally poor quality wine that was finding its way onto the export market, predominantly through the operation of overseas agents ('middle-men'). This could potentially have a negative influence on the market, as South African wines increasingly became synonymous with poor quality.

² Such a code was implemented by the KWV in April 1992, and more recently (May 1993) the Free Trade Foundation initiated a "fair trade mark" to indicate wines from an estate where workers are treated "fairly"

3.5 RURAL FOUNDATION INVOLVEMENT IN KOELENHOF

The Rural Foundation services that farmers/farm managers found most useful, as well as their duration of membership, can be seen on Table C.

TABLE C

FARM	B	C	E	F	G	H
Services adopted in order of perceived significance (for farmer/farm manager)	1. Sport 2. Education: Foodcare and Health care 3. Management Course in Labour Relations 4. Creche 5. Education: How to form a committee and conduct a meeting 6. Education: The correct way to drink	1. Creche 2. Education: How to budget salary 3. Education: Health care 4. Gardens 5. Sports 6. Education: The correct way to drink 7. Training course for supervisors	1. Gardens	1. Sport 2. Education: Womens' Issues 3. Management course in labour relations	1. Sport 2. Education: Health care Food care 3. Gardens	1. Sport 2. 'Gods-diens' 3. 6M Training Course 4. Creche 5. Training course for supervisors 6. Education: Women's Issues
Duration of membership	6 years	3 years	3 years	2 years	5 years	8 years

Six of the nine farms studied were affiliated to the Rural Foundation. Two of these farms were particularly significant in that one (Farm B) was owned by the Chairperson of the Rural Foundation, whilst the other (Farm H) was managed (until 1981) by the founder of the Rural Foundation, J.H. Coetzee. Reasons given by all interviewees for joining the Rural Foundation were remarkably similar: to improve the working and living conditions of the workers. Five of the nine farmers/farm managers thought that the Rural Foundation was providing a good service to farmers and farmworkers; it was only Farmer E who thought that the Rural Foundation did not benefit either him or his workers. He stated, 'I don't think they've [the Rural Foundation] done anything for us. I think the Rural Foundation works fine if you're a big farm, and are prepared to spend your life driving your workers around from tug-of-war competitions here, to women's meetings there ... The Rural Foundation is not the beginning and ending of problems'. This point was echoed by Farm Manager A, who was not affiliated to the Rural Foundation. He pointed out that 'the Rural Foundation follow-up is not as good as their ideas, particularly for smaller farms My experience of the Rural Foundation is that you can do what they do, but you can do it better on your own'. The three farmers/farm managers whose farms were not affiliated to the Rural Foundation made the point that the facilities for workers, as well as general working conditions, were as good as many Rural Foundation farms.

With regards the Working Life Programme services offered by the Rural Foundation, only two of the farms sent supervisors

for training courses with the Rural Foundation, the other farms making use of the Kromme Rhee training centre. Two farmers from Farms B and H, both sons of the owner(s) of the farms, attended the labour relations course with the Rural Foundation. Of the six Rural Foundation farms, two had committees that bargained with management (Farms C and H), whilst the others functioned more as 'consulting mechanisms'. One farm manager (of Farm H), had his workers take the 6M training programme. Farm Manager H reported that the course was a great success.

None of the farmers/farm managers on the six Rural Foundation farms in the study had attended any of the Rural Foundation Management Life programmes, which included courses in Land Management, Capital Management, and Manpower Management. The interviewees gave the impression that they perceived themselves as competent in these domains.

The Social Life projects in which the six Rural Foundation farms in the study were involved, are illustrated in Table C. All six farms had begun the process of upgrading their employees' living quarters. Five of the six farms had electrified the houses for the workers, whilst the sixth farm was in the process of doing so. Two of the farms had built community halls, two had built sports fields, three had creches, while five farms participated in Rural Foundation organised sports events. On three farms workers had made vegetable and flower gardens near their homes with land and water provided by the farmer, while all but one

farm ran education projects on one or more of the following: food care, health care, the correct way to consume alcohol, women's issues, 'Godsdiens' [religion], how to budget, and how to form committees and conduct meetings.

3.6 THE CHANGING TECHNIQUES IN LABOUR MANAGEMENT

Eight of the nine interviewees reported that the particular management techniques on their farms had changed in the past six years. The farm manager (Farm H) who reported no changes argued that things had changed over ten years ago with the previous manager, Jan 'Boland' Coetzee. ' Since I joined the farm in 1981, I've just carried on with the particular way of doing things that Jan 'Boland' Coetzee had started. So we don't work them in the old paternalistic style ...'.

Of the other eight interviewees, three reported introducing new ways of managing farm labour when they joined the farms. According to Farm manager I, who joined the farm four years ago, 'I believe from some of the labourers who stayed on the farm that the previous manager was one of the 'old school'. I've had to change a few things that they've had drilled into them. I think they've come a long way since then ...' Farm Manager C, when he joined the farm three years ago, also brought his ideas and techniques with him, as well as seven families. He stated, 'I abide by the Rural Foundation recommendations: a contract, leave, sick leave, a dismissal package, etc. The key word is trust. I

trust them and they trust me. For the families that were here already, things must have changed a lot'. A similar story was told by Farm Manager A, ' Two years ago there was a more conservative farm manager here, a typical Boland farmer, so I've changed a lot. Now the farmworkers run the farm themselves. I can go away for two weeks, and they know what to do. Before they had to be told what to do. Now they have the responsibilities to make their own decisions, that's what I want'.

The following quotes from farmers/farm managers interviewed in my study in Koelenhof, illustrate this language:

The interviewees from Farms D, E and G also said that they thought their management of labour had changed in the last few years. Farmer D said that whilst he did not have any formal training in labour relations, what he had learnt from other farmers and managers had caused him to change his techniques , ' I'm trying to communicate more with my workers, trying to make them more responsible. I listen to them more than I used to'. Farmer E had to dismiss a manager 'who thought it was his right to manhandle workers. Since then things have changed quite a lot'.

Farms B, and F both had management personnel who had attended Rural Foundation courses in labour relations. On Farm B, owned by a father and two sons, one of the sons had attended the course. Similarly on Farm F, the son of one of the owners had attended the course. Farmer B reported, 'I attended a four day course in labour relations that had been developed by the Rural

Foundation together with the Boskop Training Centre. It was like a Bible to me. It taught me how to have proper labour relations, how to have a disciplinary code, how to solve grievances etc. ... Now I feel confident. I've got a B.Sc. which helps me technically, but nothing about being a manager. And in my job I spend more than 60% of the time in labour relations.' Farmers B and F reported changes in labour management technique since having attended the course in labour relations. According to the Farmer F, 'if someone needs to be fired, for example, for beating up a woman, the committee decides. Now we give him a week, whereas in the past we would have chased him away. In the past we were more autocratic, so we've changed. Farmer B reported significant changes, particularly in grievance and disciplinary procedures.

3.7 LIAISON COMMITTEES

Six of the nine farms had liaison committees functioning on them; Farms A and D had never had liaison committees, whilst the system on Farm E had broken down and was no longer functioning. It can thus be seen that all the Rural Foundation farms had implemented liaison committees, however these structures were not confined to Rural Foundations farms, as in the case of Farm I. Both the Farmer D, and the Farm Manager A stated that they 'communicated' with their workers through their foremen. If problems could not be solved through the foremen, workers could approach the farmer directly. Farm Manager A pointed out that this did not happen very often. He stated that

he liked the idea of liaison committees, but argued that 'we don't need it here because we're just a few labourers.' Farmer D also liked the concept of liaison committees, and said that he was thinking of introducing them in the future. The only other farm that did not have functioning committees, was Farm E. According to the farmer: 'We acted out the Rural Foundation idea to have a farm committee, but it was a total dismal failure. The ringleaders were the guys who got themselves on to the committee ... they were the guys who got the drunkest of the lot on weekends. Now, if any worker have got problems, they can come to me through the garden boy. They can see me anytime they like if they've got a grievance they cannot sort out with the [white] foreman.'

Of the six committees that were functioning on the farms, three were functioning well (Farms C, F, and H), while three were functioning quite well (Farms B, G and I). Farm C had one committee, comprised of two males and two females. The committee met twice a month to discuss problems in both the workers 'working life' and 'home life'. 'This could be anything, housing conditions - a toilet not working properly, a raise in wages etc.' (Farm Manager C). Farm H had two committees operating, one for work issues, and one for 'home' issues. The committees did not meet regularly though, 'sometimes once every two weeks, sometimes once every two months'. According to Farm Manager H), 'everything we do is through a committee. I don't hire and fire people. We sit together and decide on holidays, leave, wages, everything. In fact the whole management of the farm is done by

the son of the owner, myself, the three foremen, and the head of the work committee. The other committee decides about sport, recreation, housing and things like that'.

Farm F also had two committees functioning, one for African workers and one for coloured workers. The reason for the committees was, 'They tell us their needs, we tell them if we can give them what they want. I tell them I don't want to be confronted with a situation where they go to a union. They know that we both live on and off the farm. We are dependent on each other. In dependent on their labour, they're dependent on me to provide work and pay their wages. We try and have these committees functioning so we can talk to each other. If someone needs to be fired, for example for beating up a woman, it's the committee who decides' (Farmer F).

Farms B, G and I all reported some problems with the functioning of committees. Farm B had two committees on each of their farms, 'one that looks after their problems at work, and one that looks after their problems when they go home'. According to Farmer B, 'the work committee works well because we're well organised in the workplace - everyone knows who are the foremen, the senior workers, the junior workers etc. We have this grievance and disciplinary thing going very well. It's the committee for home that's not working well. There's problems with the committee members, they don't communicate well with the others. I want to start a new scheme'. The committee of Farm I consisted of the foreman and two (male) workers. 'At these meetings we discuss all

matters relating to their work and the rest of their lives on the farm. But I think it could work a lot better. I think some of the other workers are jealous of the committee members. They don't always respect their decisions' (Farmer I).

Farm Manager G who had implemented two liaison committees, one for work matters, and one for-home life, also thought that the committees could function a little better. The committee for work matters seemed, as in the case of Farm B, to operate more smoothly. As for the committee for home life, the manager suggested it was just a case of educating workers and their families about how this committee should function. 'The workers use it to get what they want instead of what's best for everybody' (Farm Manager G).

3.8 FARMERS' ATTITUDES TO LABOUR LEGISLATION FOR FARMWORKERS

Seven of the nine interviewees said that they thought that the extension of some labour legislation, notably the Basic Conditions of Employment Act, to cover farmworkers was absolutely necessary and long overdue. For these farmers/farm managers, the extension of the Unemployment Insurance Fund was also seen as necessary, although some reservations were expressed as to the extension of the Wages Act. Farmers/farm managers expressed concern as to how in-kind payments, particularly housing, were to be taken into account. Their attitudes to the Labour Relations Act will be dealt with in the next sub-section: Attitudes to

Trade Unions. The farmers/farm managers pointed out that, in any case, the proposed legislation would not affect them as they were above the minimum conditions that would be stipulated by the laws. Farmer B, for example, stated, 'In the last few years we have tried to get everything in place before the legislation comes in. Today we are well ahead of the proposed new legislation. I think it [the legislation] is a good idea because some of our farmers don't abide to basic conditions of employment, and this affects our overseas markets'.

A similar story was told by Farm Manager H, 'I don't think it [the new legislation] will affect us in any way. Our house is clean, we live to those rules at the moment. It will be a positive thing for workers on farms where conditions are bad'.

It was only Farm Manager A and Farmer F respectively who expressed some concern over the implementation of labour legislation for farmworkers. According to Farm Manager A, 'The thing I don't like with legislation is let me give an example. In harvesting time, the best time to pick is early morning, so one start at 5.30 am, but then they end at 4 pm. Laws set their rules, and this makes people lazy. Let me give you another case. I had a worker who drank and smoke dagga, and cut a woman's leg nearly right off. I fired the guy, one week to get off the farm. They know that when I fire them they've got one week to get off the farm. First thing he does, he goes to the advice office in Stellenbosch and complains there. They phoned me and told me I should not do that. I get cross because its only

the lazy buggers who go there to complain, because if he wasn't lazy, he'd get a job tomorrow. Now I have to keep that guy here for a month, while there are lots of guys who want the job and really need the house. Now I have to keep the lazy bugger who's a criminal in my house'. Farmer F stated that he would agree to labour legislation only if it benefitted both labourers and farmers. He added that 'we must not be pushed into the situation where we cannot have discipline on the farm. We need to have discipline on the farm because these chaps [workers] have got to behave themselves because we live so close together'.

3.9 FARMERS' VIEWS ON TRADE UNIONS

Generally-speaking, the interviewees were not as favourable to the Labour Relations Act and the prospects of trade unions organising their workers, as they were to the other labour legislation. Attitudes ranged from acceptance of trade unions, in principle, to tolerance, to straight-forward antagonism and hostility. Farm Manager C and Farmer E were quite positive to the idea of trade unions organising farmworkers; perhaps this was because they did not perceive their farms being targeted by trade unions. Farm Manager C, for example, stated, 'Trade Unions could help certain workers on certain farms, but on this farm, I don't think there's a need for a trade union'. Farmer E said that he thought that trade unions for farmworkers were 'a good thing. Farmworkers would definitely benefit from them'. This farmer, however, was critical of trade unions that were trying to organise workers in the Stellenbosch area: 'The trade unions

we've seen here are a joke. They're more interested in getting their R2 a month. The trade unions will get on the bigger farms, such as Boschendal, but they won't come here. We'll only give them R20 per month'.

Some farmers/farm managers (Farms A, G, H and I) said that, in principle, they were not opposed to trade unions having the right to organise farmworkers; they were however, concerned with the political nature of trade unions in South Africa. Farm Manager H, for example, stated, 'I'm not scared of trade unions. My farmworkers won't, out of themselves, go to a trade union. These guys are not interested. If you look after your people, they won't be interested in a trade union. A trade union that is not political, I've got no problem with, but when its political, I've got a problem with it'. Farm Manager I made a similar point, 'I don't think trade unions are such a bad thing in themselves. I'm worried that they've got a political agenda, and can stir things up, if you know that I mean. But we're a small operation, so I don't think they'll bother us here'.

The Farmers B and F, notably managing the two biggest farms that were investigated, together with Farmer D, thought that trade unions had no place on farms. Farmer B pointed out, 'these people work on our farms, we're very close neighbours. We must all live from this farm, so I don't like to see the situation where we have a fight about certain aspects. We can solve our problems without a third party'. Farmer D argued, 'Some legislation, for instance that which allows trade unions, I don't think is such a good thing. Things on farms are very different to cities where

trade unions are strong in industry. There, I think they could be a good thing, but on the farms I don't know. Me and the workers, we can sort out our own problems. We don't need unions to make problems for us, that weren't there in the first place'. Farmer F was vehemently opposed to trade unions: 'I've spoken to a lot of people, and I don't agree with people who say it is inevitable that there will be trade unions for farm workers. Everywhere in the world, people are going away from trade unions, so I don't see the inevitability. I think we must be very careful. Trade unions already function on large conglomerates: farms that have factories eg. Rainbow Chickens. But these big farms can live with it, smaller farms cannot. Also, it's a hell of a job for a union to organise on smaller farms. They're already organising on my farm. I don't think we should be forced to accept trade unions. I cannot accept the situation where your workers tell you how you must run the farm. A strike on a farm is unacceptable. I would stop farming if I had the threat of a strike hanging over me all the time'.

3.10 ATTITUDES TO THE 'NEW SOUTH AFRICA'

All nine interviewees reported that they were optimistic about the political future of South Africa. Six farmers/farm managers (Farm A, C, D, E, H, I) explicitly applauded F.W. de Klerk, whilst the other three farmers/farm managers gave their implicit support for de Klerk in their support of the government's reform initiatives. Farm Manager A, for example, commented, 'I've never

had as much hope for the country as I've got now. For the first time in history we've got a leader in F.W.'. Farmer D echoed these sentiments, 'I'm very positive about the future. I think if one person can get this country back on the road again. it's F.W. de Klerk'.

Farmer E said, 'Politically, I'm delighted with F.W. [de Klerk]. The D.P. [Democratic Party] who I used to support, should join the Nationalist Party. F.W. needs all the encouragement he can get'. While all farmers/farm managers were positive about the political future of South Africa, some were concerned about economic prospects. Farmer E, for example, commented, 'The economic sphere is extremely upsetting. We're all in for hard times. The average investor has burnt his fingers once too often in Africa; perhaps they'll invest in Eastern Europe. We need capital that we're not going to get.' Farmer D was also concerned about South Africa's economic future, although arguing that the economic slump would be short-lived, 'I think, economically, we're going to have a few uphill rides, but I think things will sort themselves out when we get foreign investment back in South Africa'.

3.11 THE FUTURE OF WINE FARMING?

All nine interviewees were optimistic about the future of wine farming in South Africa. All nine farmers/farm managers mentioned the potential export market that would increasingly become

the potential export market that would increasingly become accessible to South African wine producers. Four of the nine interviewees spoke of the potential local market with the burgeoning black middle class. As the Farmer E noted, 'wine farming is the one bright spark in South Africa's bleak economic future'. According to the Farm Manager I, 'things haven't been so wonderful for a lot of guys [farmers] in the last few years, and farmers have even been talking about putting in more fruit: it's more profitable. Now I think wine farmers are seeing light at the end of the tunnel'. Farm Manager C was of the same opinion, 'At the moment, fruit farming is a far better enterprise. But in the future, if wine farmers produce quality, as we do, as Nederburg does, the future could look good'.

It is clear, after speaking to farmers/farm managers in Koelenhof, that wine farming has been through a depressed period. According to Farmer B, in 1989, the wine industry produced a 50% surplus that could not be consumed. Not all farmers/farm managers in Koelenhof, however reported an overproduction crisis. Farmer E and Farm Managers C and H, for example, reported not having sufficient wine to meet the local demand, and therefore could not really consider exporting. However, with the decline of internal and external pressure for sanctions, overseas markets are becoming accessible, with the result that all wine farmers face a brighter future. According to the interviewees, this can only be of benefit to the workers. As the Farmer B stated, 'If you only sell 50% of your wine, you make no money, so your workers get monkey-nuts in pay. New markets and better prices would

benefit everybody'.

3.12 CONCLUSION

It is clearly evident that all nine farmers/farm managers interviewed were engaged in the process of restructuring labour relations on their farms. However, of the nine farms in the study, only four had completed the transition to co-optive methods of labour control, with the others still engaged in the process of transformation. This is in line with the estimation of Andre Lyker, the Rural Foundation Community Development Officer for Stellenbosch, who suggested that by 1990, 60% of wine farmers in the Stellenbosch area had made the transition to co-optive techniques of labour management (interview 13/11/1989). The rate at which restructuring is occurring in the area can be seen if one compares these figures to Scharf's estimation that in 1984, 20% of wine farmers in the Stellenbosch area had adopted co-optive labour control techniques.

What becomes evident from the interviews with the farmers/farm managers in Koelenhof, are the underlying motivations behind the new methods of labour control. Clearly the objective of this approach is to motivate farm labourers to become satisfied, dedicated, and productive workers, enticing them through improved working and living conditions to remain on the farms. Emphasis was put on educating workers, skills training, worker responsibility, involving workers in decision-making processes, and implementing collective bargaining procedures such as liaison

committees to enhance communication with the labour force. At the same time, workers' living conditions were upgraded, with improved housing, electrical power, water-borne indoor toilets and baths, recreation centres with televisions, sport fields, land and water for gardens, and creches being provided. These co-optive methods of labour control must be seen to be part of a conscious new labour relations strategy that emphasizes employee development as a means to keep the more diligent and productive workers on the farm.

What is also clear from the interviews is that paternalism has not disappeared on those wine farms that employ co-optive management techniques. Take for example the comment of Farmer E, 'The farming system operates almost along the lines of the old feudal system. When a guy signs a contract, he gets the farm package: a house, protection, if his wife is having a baby in the middle of the night, I [the farmer] get out of bed and take her to the hospital, if they're sick I take them to the clinic, it's all part of the package'. What has happened is that paternalism has changed its form to suit the needs of the farmers of those modernized farms. This new paternalism does not necessarily empower the workers, nor result in workers being less dependent on the farmer. As Bosman (1983, cited in Skalnik, 1985: 21) points out, 'Even on farms where changes have taken place, the farmer as employer still holds in his hands the key to almost all aspects of life and work of the farm labourer'. In the words of Hamman (1989:4), 'die boer bly maar die Baas'. According to Skalnik (1985:22), the structural limitations are too many, and

the huge social cleavage between farmers and workers too deeply entrenched to foster the real development and empowerment of workers through the new managerial philosophy.

However, whilst primarily benefitting the farmer, 'enlightened' paternalism has also been accompanied by vast improvements in farmworkers' working and living conditions. Furthermore, whilst dependence is still being reproduced, at the same time workers have been given more space to explore discursive formations other than those constructed by management: this will be investigated in the following chapter. With the change to co-optive forms of labour control, the farm unit ceases to be the 'total institution' it was characterized to be.

CHAPTER 4

LABOURING THROUGH CHANGE: FARMWORKERS' RESPONSES TO 'ENLIGHTENED' PATERNALISM

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter analyses the ways in which farmworkers are experiencing the restructuring process that has recently transformed labour relations on the wine farms in the Western Cape. The discussion is both descriptive and analytical. Evidence collected from interviews with 25 farmworkers in Koelenhof provides the basis for an analysis of the experience of these farmworkers. This leads to a critical assessment of the potential for the empowerment of farmworkers, via the organization of farmworkers in the trade union movement.

4.2 A PROFILE OF FARMWORKERS IN KOELENHOF

25 farmworkers were interviewed, with at least one being from each of the nine farms in the study. Of the 25 farmworkers, 17 were men, whilst eight were women. All the farmworkers were coloured.

Age

The youngest worker interviewed was 23 years of age, whilst the oldest was 43. The average age of the 25 workers was 33 years.

Marital Status

23 of the 25 interviewees were married, all with spouses living and working on the farms. The only unmarried worker was a woman whose husband was deceased: she and her children currently lived with an unmarried male worker, and a young man, aged 24, who had recently joined the farm, and was planning to marry in the immediate future. This is reflective of the trend among wine farmers in the Stellenbosch area to employ the labour of families, rather than single men and women. All the interviewees, except for the young man mentioned above, had children, the number of which varied between one and eight. The average number of children per worker was 3.2. Of the 77 children born to the 24 interviewees with children, only 31 were staying with their parents on the farm. None of the workers interviewed had been previously married, that is to say, they had never been re-married.

Religious Affiliation

All twenty five interviewees said that they were Christians. 22 said that they attended church regularly. 20 of the interviewees were members of the Nederduits Gereformeerde Kerk.

Education

None of the interviewees had obtained their matriculation certificate. The most highly educated interviewee was a foreman from Farm B: he had passed standard nine. The foreman of Farm H, who had passed standard seven, as well as a male vineyard worker from Farm A, who had also attained his standard seven, were the next most highly educated workers interviewed. The average level of education for the male interviewees was standard four. With regards the female interviewees, the most highly educated was a cellar worker from Farm E, who had passed standard six. The average level of education for the female farmworkers was standard three. One woman reported that she had never been to school.

Previous Employment

19 of the 25 interviewees said that they were employed as farmworkers in the jobs they held prior to their current employment on wine farms in Koelenhof. Of these 19 workers, 12 had been employed on farms in the Stellenbosch/Paarl area, 11 of them on wine farms. The other seven workers had previously worked on farms in the Boland and Karoo, six on wine farms. The six workers who had never previously done farm work had all joined the farm when they were relatively young: under the age of 26 years. Of these workers, two women had been employed as a sales assistant in Stellenbosch, and as a domestic servant in Paarl respectively, whilst of the men, two had been employed in

construction (one with housing and the other with roads) in Worcester and Malmesbury respectively, one had been a painter in Stellenbosch, and the other a scrapyard worker in Bellville.

Length of Employment on Farm

The duration that the interviewees had been working on the farms on which they were currently employed, ranged from six months to 16 years. The average length of employment was four years.

Occupational Status

Of the 17 male interviewees, two were foremen (on Farms B and H), whilst the rest were vineyard workers. Three of these vineyard workers did other work on the farm: one also worked as a milker, one as a gardener, and one as a welder.

Of the women, seven were employed to work in the vineyard and in the cellar (where there was one), whilst one woman was employed as a domestic worker in the home of the farmer.

Working Hours

For most of the year, the working day varied between nine hours and eleven hours on the nine farms in the study, for the foremen, vineyard and cellar workers. The worker who also worked as a milker, worked an eleven and a half hour day. All workers were given at least a one hour break for lunch, with most farms also

giving workers a short break (approximately fifteen minutes) in the mid-morning and mid-afternoon. During harvest season, however, some workers reported working 12 hours per day, beginning as early as 5:30 in the morning.

REMUNERATION

Cash Payments

The worker earning the highest wages of the interviewees, was a foreman from Farm B, who earned R600 per month. The other foreman interviewed earned R450 per month. The most highly paid of the vineyard and cellar workers was a 'senior' male worker with 16 years experience from Farm H: he earned R385 per month. For the other male vineyard and cellar workers interviewed, wages ranged from R170 to R350 per month. Four of the eight female workers received regular wages of between R120 and R200 per month (from Farms B, E, and H). The other four women interviewed were not paid regular wages as they worked on a piece-work basis, and were paid either for days or weeks worked. Those who were paid daily earned between R8 and R11 per day, whilst those who were paid weekly earned between R30 and R40 per week.

All workers who were paid regular wages were paid weekly. Most of the workers who received regular wages had money deducted for pension (between R10 and R50 per month), as well as other expenses such as electricity. All farms gave bonuses, some once a month, some every three months, and some farms once a year.

In-kind Payments

With the exception of one woman who was living with, although not married to, a male farmworker, all of the interviewees spoke of the house in which they were allowed to live in return for their labour. It was assumed by all the male workers that they were entitled to live in the house as long as they remained employed at the farm. Two of the women stated emphatically that the house 'belonged' as much to them as to their husbands. Four of the women felt that they had as much right to occupy the house as their husbands, but were unsure of their status, should their husband either die or be dismissed. Two women felt that they would surely lose their house should their husband, or 'boyfriend', die or be dismissed. One of the women in this latter category had already experienced such a situation in which her husband had died, and she was given two weeks to leave the farm, in order for the farmer to provide accommodation to another male worker and his family. This woman now lived with her 'boyfriend' on the farm on which she was currently employed (Farm A). As a female worker, she pointed out, she would never be given a house in which she and her children could reside. The unmarried male worker on Farm B, had been given a house.

23 of the 25 workers lived in electrified houses, with 20 of these workers having money deducted from their wages as payment for electricity consumed.

Other in-kind payments named by the interviewees included surplus fruit and vegetables grown on the farm; the provision of transport to church, to Rural Foundation-organized events, or to the coast for recreation; medical benefits; pension benefits; as well as facilities such as creches, community halls, and sports fields.

Grievances

A majority of the interviewees reported that they had no complaints about their job, living conditions, or their 'boss'. It must be noted, however, that I felt, with many of the interviews I performed, that workers did not trust me sufficiently to speak openly and honestly about their problems and grievances: I was an 'outsider', and a potential relayer of information to the boss.

Six of the 25 workers reported that they felt that they were underpaid for the work they performed. A foreman, for instance, who was among the most highly paid of all the interviewees, said that he had recently raised the issue of a wage increase with the boss, who had not yet made a decision. If the foreman did not get the desired raise, he said he would consider leaving the farm in search of other employment. Two other male vineyard workers (Farms D and I) also stated that if their wages were not increased in the next six months or so, they would also consider terminating their employment. The other three workers who complained about their wages, a woman and two men from farms B,

E and H respectively, all said that whilst they were dissatisfied with their incomes, they had no plans to leave these farms.

Other grievances reported included a complaint from a female worker from Farm A who pointed out that women on that farm only got paid for those weeks that they worked. She did not work when it rained, which was for most of the winter, and therefore had very little income on which to live during the 'rainy season', causing her to incur debt, both to the boss and to other workers.

Two female workers, from Farms F and I, complained that there were no creche facilities provided on the farm. This caused them difficulties on those days that they were required to work.

4.3 THE PROTOCOL AND POLITICS OF WORKERS' GRIEVANCES

All the grievances expressed by interviewees and listed above were articulated by nine workers. Many other interviewees felt that problems that did arise on the farm could be sorted out by the farmer/farm manager through the working of the committee (should there be one). This is illustrated in the reply of a senior farmworker from Farm H, 'As long as I've been on the farm, I can't complain that I've had any problems with my work. The boss is not unreasonable, he'll try and give us what we ask; if it is not good for the farm he'll tell us'. This statement also illustrates the parameters within which grievances and complaints must be articulated. A grievance that is seen as legitimate,

within the discourse of 'enlightened' paternalism, is one which, in some way or another, serves the interests of the farm. Here the operation of liaison committees is fundamental in articulating the interests of the farm. Amongst some of the workers' responses to the question, why has the farmer implemented committees? were the following: '... they are there to help the foreman' (Farmworker, Farm E); '[We have them]..so that the farmer can explain to us the things we don't understand about our work' (Farmworker, Farm B); and 'Committees are there to correct things; if you've got problems you go to the committee'. (Farmworker, Farm B).

As illustrated by these three statements, farmworkers' perceptions of liaison committees differed tremendously.

I found that farmworkers' perceptions of committees on Farms, B, C, G, and H were more favourable than on Farms D and F. Workers on the former farms tended to see the committee as a mechanism through which they could raise grievances. Workers on Farms D and F generally saw the committees as mechanisms through which the farmer could give orders and manage the farm.

Some interviewees perceived that a division had developed between committee members and the workers whose interests they represented. Committee members, because of the relative authority bestowed upon them by the farmer, became privileged in the eyes of other workers. This led to conflict, as reported by a worker on Farm E which closed down its liaison committee because it did not function as it should. It was evident on the farms studied,

that liaison committee members are relatively empowered members of the workforce, in that they act as 'gatekeepers' in the flow of grievances from workers to the farmer/farm manager. As a committee member of Farm B explains, 'Although the committee only meets once a month, we are open every day for a complaint. If we think it is worth it, we will take the complaint to the boss'. It is the committee members and/or the foremen, who decide whether a complaint is legitimate, and whether it will be raised at a committee meeting. Of central importance in this decision-making process is the notion of 'bring sy kant' [fulfilling mutual obligations].¹ 'Bring sy kant' does not only incorporate values such as working efficiently and productively, but also suggests 'adapting' to the dominant world-view of the farmworkers who work alongside you.² Permeating this world-view is the discourse of co-optive management, enticing workers to persuade their fellow-workers to come to work on time and sober, to work as efficiently as possible, and to always do what is best for the farm. Workers who do not conform to these values could find themselves outside the parameters of grievance procedures. The grievances of certain workers never reached the farmer/farm manager for the very reason that committee members and/or foremen had the power to render such grievances null and void. The chain of events revealed by a worker illustrates this point: A few

¹ Literally translated this term means "brings his side".

² A number of farmworkers gave as their reason for conflict and/or dismissals on the farm, the fact that certain workers cannot 'aanpas' ['adapt' or 'fit in'] to farm life.

workers from the farm on which he worked began campaigning for other workers to join them in their request for a wage raise. This bid, however, never gathered enough momentum to reach the farm manager, having been deemed illegitimate by the foremen and other workers. According to the worker who was interviewed: 'They [those who wanted the raise in wages] were not working hard so they were getting lower salaries than us. If a worker does not [fulfil his obligations], he cannot get more money'.

The situation can be seen to exist on the wine farms in Koelenhof that formal and informal grievance procedures serve to contain and limit real antagonisms directed at management. Grievances were raised and resolved within structures that simply did not allow for challenges to the authority of the farmer/farm manager. Du Toit (1991:9) confirms this point, arguing '... when confronted with problems from management's side, the committee responds, not by criticising management, but by trying even harder to promote good communication, working even more industriously through the 'right channels' '. The result, Du Toit writes, '... is a politics aimed at personal favour or fixated on, and doomed to, 'going through the right channels', a politics that subjugates workers to the authority of management and leaves then dependent on its goodwill'.

Whilst the discussion so far has been centred around the ideological moment: how workers have been persuaded (intellectually and morally) to structure their grievances in terms of what is best for the farm, this is not to say that the

failure of farmworkers to articulate grievances which reveal fundamental antagonisms between workers and farmers/farm managers is due only to the functioning of ideology. In a very real sense, consent has been reinforced with coercion. This is explicitly revealed in the comments of a farmworker from Farm A: 'The workers can't complain, because they need their houses. If we complain, we lose our houses'. Furthermore, the worker here is referring to 'complaints' of a nature different to the grievances I have so far discussed. He is speaking of 'complaints' which are outside the discourse of 'enlightened paternalism', 'complaints' that do not have the sanction of management, and which, in some way or another, challenge the authority of the farmer/farm manager. As will be argued later, it is around such 'complaints' that a separate workers' consciousness might be constructed.

4.4 WORKERS RESPONSES TO REFORMS INITIATED BY FARMERS/MANAGERS AND THE RURAL FOUNDATION

All the interviewees who had worked and resided on the farm on which they were currently employed for four years and longer, reported that, in some way or another, their working and/or living conditions had improved. Most of the workers, ten of the 17 who were in this category, spoke of wages increases ranging from 10% to 350% over a four year to six year period. The highest wage increase reported was by a worker on Farm C who said that when he joined the farm in 1983, he received R25 per week, whilst his current wage was R90 per week. He attributed this increased

wage to the arrival of a new farm manager on the farm in 1986; that year the new manager gave him a 100% increase.

Another improvement in working conditions was reported by two workers (from Farms B and G), who noted that the length of their working day had been shortened.

All the other workers who reported improvements referred to the upgrading of physical facilities, as well as services provided by the Rural Foundation. Eight of the workers mentioned that their houses had recently been electrified; for example, a farmworker on Farm B commented that when he joined the farm a few years ago, only the foremen's homes were electrified, but one year later the farmer had all the workers' houses electrified. Six interviewees reported that the farmers had improved their houses by renovating, painting and providing indoor latrines (Farms B, C, G and H). Four workers reported creches having been built by the farmer (from Farms B, C and H), one worker (from Farm H) reported the building of a community hall, and one worker (from Farm C) reported that the farm manager had provided land and water for the construction of gardens.

Only five workers (from Farms B, C, F and H) noted that the Rural Foundation had played a positive role in bringing about the forementioned improvements. One worker, on Farm H, when asked why the boss had improved living and working conditions on the farm, gave as his reason: 'It has to do with the community developers: the Rural Foundation'. When asked directly about their perception

of the Rural Foundation, however, all but three workers on Rural Foundation affiliated farms said that the Rural Foundation had done good work on the farms on which they worked. Twelve of the workers spoke of the Rural Foundation with reference to recreational services and facilities which had been made available to them, such as sports events and competitions, whilst only five workers mentioned the educational programmes provided by the Rural Foundation. None of the workers, of their own accord, mentioned the Rural Foundation as being instrumental in establishing liaison committees on the farms. It can be assumed that workers perceived this to be the prerogative of the farmer/farm manager. Of the workers who did not reflect positively on the Rural Foundation, two workers (from Farms F and E) declined to comment, whilst one worker from farm E reported that the Rural Foundation had simply not worked on his farm because the boss had not made available to the workers the Rural Foundation services.

Almost half of the interviewees said that they did not know why the farmer/farm manager, with or without the help of the Rural Foundation, was improving their working and living conditions. The answers of the other workers were remarkably similar to the answer of the foreman of Farm B: 'The boss gives back to us what we put into the work'. The general perception existed amongst workers, that they had 'earned' the improvements by virtue of their increased efficiency and productivity. Once again the notion of 'bring sy kant' was manifest: workers perceived that they had certain obligations to fulfil in return for the

benevolence bestowed upon them by the farmer/farm manager, and vice versa.

4.5 WORKERS' ATTITUDES TO TRADE UNIONS

Once again, I need to make the point that as an 'outsider' previously unknown to the workers, I did not necessarily have the full trust of those I was interviewing. I feel this is partly the reason behind the fact that 14 of the 25 interviewees responded by saying: they did not know anything about trade unions (six workers), they did not have an opinion on trade unions (four workers), or else by declining to comment at all, remaining silent (four workers). Of the remaining eleven workers, eight said that they thought trade unions for farmworkers were a good idea. On only one farm, Farm F, did workers report that they had had contact with a trade union: both workers interviewed said that the Food and Allied Workers Union (FAWU)³ had attempted to sign a recognition agreement with the farmer. The farmer had refused, arguing that the enterprise (which was predominantly a poultry operation, with grapes for wine being a minor part of the business) was a farm, not a factory. Even though FAWU had made contact primarily with the poultry workers, the workers who worked with the pigs, sheep, and vines had expressed the desire to be organised under FAWU. Both these workers who spoke positively about trade unions showed a heightened level of awareness about the role of trade unions on farms. As one of the

³ In actual fact a project set up and administered by the Food and Allied Workers Union: the Farm Workers Project.

workers commented, 'They can do much good for us here. The boss does not always listen to us ... they [trade unions] can make him listen'. When asked what he was referring to when he said: 'trade unions can do much good', the worker replied, '... they [trade unions] can help to make sure the boss pays us properly'.

Other workers, for example on farms C and H, similarly thought that trade unions could benefit their lives, but did not appear to have as comprehensive an understanding of trade unions as workers on Farm F. The general understanding of trade unions conveyed by these workers was that they were organisations that could facilitate better wages being paid by the farmer. Most of these workers had heard about trade unions from workers on other farms, or from family and friends in urban areas. Workers on Farm B had been informed about trade unions by the farmer, who told them that trade unions would be approaching them in the near future. All the interviewees from this farm expressed very similar views about trade unions, which can be assumed to be those disseminated to them by the farmer. A typical opinion as articulated by one worker was, 'I think trade unions can be a good thing, but only if they're just concerned about our work. We don't want trade unions that are politically inspired'. FAWU as well as all COSATU affiliated unions would undoubtedly be included in this category of 'politically-inspired' unions.

Three workers reported that they did not think there was any need for trade unions on farms. As a worker from Farm A commented, 'I don't think they [trade unions] are necessary because if a man

works hard and does good, the boss sees this, and you'll get more [money]'. Similarly, a worker from Farm H noted that 'there is no need for trade unions and strikes here. If we've got problems we go to the committee'. The other worker (from Farm C) who thought that trade unions for farmworkers were not a good idea, could not give a reason to substantiate his viewpoint.

Of the 11 workers who expressed their feelings about trade unions, six said that they did not think they would be discriminated against by the farmer should they join a trade union, four workers reported that they were uncertain how the farmer/farm manager would react, while only one worker said that the boss would not like it should he join a trade union. Two workers (both from Farm F), from the category that did not think that they would be discriminated against, qualified their answer by stating that this would only be the case if all farmworkers together joined the union.

4.6 POLITICAL AFFILIATION

The two questions that attempted to discern the farmworkers' political affiliations were generally poorly answered. Less than half of the farmworkers answered the questions; the others either remained silent until I moved on to the following question (seven workers), said that they did not have any opinion (four workers), or said that they did not know anything about politics (two workers). The two questions asked were:

- (1) Do you support any political party or political leader?
- (2) What do you feel about the release of Nelson Mandela?

All the interviewees who answered the first question did so in terms of individual leaders (Mandela, De Klerk, and Buthelezi), rather than the political parties/organisations these individuals represented.

Only one farmworker identified Nelson Mandela as a leader he would possibly support now that he was free. Six farmworkers said that F.W. de Klerk would be their choice as leader, whilst one worker (a foreman) said that he would support 'Gatsha' [ie. Buthelezi]. One worker, while he did not name any political leader of a party/organisation, said that he 'would follow the white people because they had done a lot of good around here [presumably on the farm and around Stellenbosch]' (farmworker, Farm C). Four workers replied that they were unsure which leader or political party/organisation they supported. With regards their feelings towards the recent release of Nelson Mandela, five farmworkers replied that Mandela had deserved to have been sent to jail. As one of these workers answered, 'He [Mandela] did things that the Bible teaches us we must not do. He fell in his own trap ...' (farmworker, Farm A).

Seven workers thought that it had been a good idea to release Mandela, but only two workers gave reasons to substantiate their answers: 'So that he [Mandela] can talk to F.W. [de Klerk] to bring about peace' (farmworker, Farm H); 'I think he [Mandela]

has been taught a lesson' (farmworker, Farm C).

As can be seen, the political outlook of the interviewees can best be described as conservative. Besides the interviewee from farm F who identified Nelson Mandela as a potential leader, none of the interviewees perceived themselves as affiliated to political groups comprising the counter-hegemonic bloc.

4.7 PARTICIPATION IN ACTS OF RESISTANCE

When asked whether they, or anyone else on the farm, had protested or engaged in any act of resistance against the boss, all the interviewees replied in the negative. On the assumption that resignation is often a form of protest, I asked the interviewees if they knew of any workers who had recently resigned, and if so, what had motivated these workers to do so? Seven interviewees said that they knew of workers who had recently resigned. The reasons given, however, all laid the blame on the workers themselves. Some of the answers recorded were:

'He was a weakling, that is why he left' (farmworker, Farm G);
'He could not adapt to farm life. He was from the city' (farmworker, Farm A);

'He was always drunk. The boss had given him two warnings. The boss always gives three warnings, and then you leave your house [are dismissed]. But he left because he knew he could not stay on the farm. He could not change ...' (farmworker, Farm B).

Thus, apart from resignation, which was not perceived by the farmworkers themselves as acts of protest, but rather as an indication of some inferior quality of the worker himself/herself, I could find no evidence of overt or covert protest action, such as that uncovered by Scharf (1984). It must be noted yet again, that my position as an 'outsider' did not facilitate farmworkers uncovering acts of protest, such as sabotage, if they did exist.

4.8 WORKERS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS THEIR FUTURES

Only four of the 25 interviewees said that they were not planning to spend their futures on the farms on which they were currently employed. The 21 workers indicated that they were relatively satisfied with their lives on the farm and were hoping to remain in their current employment for as long as possible. Three of the four workers who were considering leaving the farm, gave as their reason the unsatisfactory wages they were paid. These workers included a foreman, as well as two vineyard workers from Farms D and I. The other worker who was considering terminating his employment (from Farm F) gave as his reason, general dissatisfaction with farm life. He had previously worked in a scrapyard in Bellville, and was considering moving back to Cape Town together with his wife and child. His wife was not permanently employed by the farmer, but worked occasionally on a piece-work basis. The other vineyard workers from Farm D and I were also planning to find employment in urban areas, one in Stellenbosch and one in Cape Town. The worker from Farm D was

thinking of self-employment as a painter, whilst the worker from Farm I was unsure what type of employment he would be seeking. The foreman wanted to carry on working on a farm, provided that the wage was satisfactory.

That workers were not wholly satisfied with their lives became evident when considering the answers to the question concerning their children's futures, and what careers they wanted their children to pursue. Only two of the 24 workers with children said that they wanted their children to also work on the farm. Nineteen workers said that they wanted their children to be as well educated as possible. In terms of preferred career choices, more than half of the workers (14) said that they wanted their daughters to be nurses, whilst 11 wanted their sons to be policemen. Nine workers indicated that they wanted their children (sons and daughters) to be teachers.

4.9 'ENLIGHTENED' PATERNALISM

Particularly significant in the construction of the world-view of farmworkers on the Koelenhof farms, is the paternalist relationship that functions to reproduce the status quo. As was argued in the previous chapter, the paternalist relationship on wine farms in the W. Cape has changed somewhat over the past two decades, as the form of exploitation of labour changed from coercive to more co-optive techniques. The farm can no longer be characterized as a 'total institution'⁷; in a number of ways, the farm has 'opened up':

- (1) Workers on farms employing co-optive management techniques have access to a range of discursive practices within which to potentially situate themselves, facilitated by greater access to various forms of media. On the majority of farms studied, workers had access to televisions, radios, as well as newspapers and magazines.
- (2) Workers' spatial mobility has increased tremendously with the participation of workers in various training programmes, sports events, competitions, and other recreational endeavours that, in effect, have brought farmworkers from a number of farms into contact with each other, as well as other social groups. The Rural Foundation has played a significant role in this process.
- (3) On co-optimely managed farms, the personal face-to-face contact with the farmer is often mediated by farm managers, foremen, and committee members (Graaf, 1991:224). In a very real sense, the absolute authority of the farmer over every aspect of the workers' lives has been diluted.

One would expect, then, some kind of cultural diversity amongst farmworkers on wine farms in Koelenhof. As Graaf (1991:224) argues, farmworkers now have a number of competing social and political realities from which to choose. Why then, are the world-views of farmworkers in Koelenhof so notably uniform and consistent? The answer lies in the concept of ideology, that set of ideas and beliefs that constrain subjects in ready-made ways

of thinking, functioning to rule out alternative ways of thinking (Abercrombie et al, 1988:71).

The ideology of 'enlightened' paternalism is all embracing, permeating all aspects of a farmworker's life on the farm, and is the fundamental basis around which his/her social identity is constructed. The fact that the farm is both the site of production and reproduction, in effect means that one is under the authority of the farmer/farm manager twenty four hours per day, seven days per week. The potential for the penetration of the ideology of 'enlightened' paternalism is enormous. This is not to say that farmworkers are puppets who are duped by the fore-mentioned ideology: farmworkers consciously select their responses according to their interests and goals they want to achieve. However, the strategic options open to farmworkers remain severely limited. A definite set of rules exist, within which farmworkers can pursue their interests. These parameters are well illustrated by a interviewee from Farm H: ' The boss lets you live. That's why I don't say I won't do it. You have to do what he says so that you can have a house and live '.

The ideology of 'enlightened' paternalism, and the discourse of co-optive management, is internalized by the farmworkers themselves. As was discussed in the previous chapter, one of the central features of this philosophy is that workers must act as if the farm belongs to them;⁴ the philosophy is that workers,

⁴ Du Toit (1991) provides a useful elaboration of this point in his discussion of the ideology of 'enlightened' paternalism.

therefore, have a vested interest in ensuring that the farm is as productive and cost-effective as possible. Workers have a sense of responsibility to the farm: part of this responsibility is to make sure other workers conform to the set of (unwritten) rules that exist to facilitate the harmonious functioning of the farm. Important actors here are the foreman and the members of liaison committees. Both foremen and liaison committee members are particularly influential members of the labour force, and therefore play a fundamental role in elaborating and disseminating the ideology of 'enlightened' paternalism. Through both formal and informal grievance procedures they mediate and dissolve potential conflict between workers and the farmer/farm manager, legitimizing certain practices whilst condemning others as not being in the interests of the farm. Foremen in particular, play the role of moral watchdogs, well illustrated in the job description of the foreman as reported by the farm manager of Farm A: 'If one [worker] drinks or behaves badly, he [the foreman] comes and tells me. There's two or three workers who don't like him for that, but these workers will go in time. The others all respect him, they know if they do something wrong, it's the right thing for him to tell me'.

Whilst conformity of farmworkers to a particular pattern of work - place behaviour can be attributed to the realisation of intellectual and moral persuasion, with the farmers/farm managers winning the consent of the workers to adopt their particular conception of the world, it is not consent alone on which farmers'/farm managers' hegemony is constructed. Underlying this

apparent consent is coercion, or the threat thereof, realised through the notion of 'huis leegmaak' [dismissal]. Despite the changes that have occurred as farmers/farm managers changed their methods of labour exploitation, power has remained firmly in the hands of the farmer/farm manager. The farmer/farm manager can dismiss workers who:

- (1) he thinks 'do not have a feeling for the farm' (Farm Manager A)
- (2) challenge his authority
- (3) are deemed 'troublemakers'
- (4) abuse alcohol
- (5) are 'lazy' and unproductive
- (6) generally don't 'fit in' to life on the farm.

Workers know that if they step outside the boundaries of acceptable behaviour, in other words, can be included in one or more of the forementioned six categories, they could be dismissed and forced to vacate their homes. The farmer/farm manager has the power to take away from workers their jobs and their homes: the boss 'lets you live', or he doesn't. Workers are conscious of their powerlessness, with this awareness underlying their culture and practices.

4.10 ASSESSING THE POSSIBILITIES FOR EMPOWERMENT

Thus far, the possibilities for the real empowerment of farmworkers on wine farms in the Western Cape seem bleak. The

hegemony of farmers seems so entrenched, with farmworkers so dependent and powerless that the effective organisation and mobilisation of farmworkers seems impossible. This need not be the case. As will be argued, with correct targeting, appropriate strategies, and sensitive direction, trade unions can play an important role in providing farmworkers with the security that is fundamental to the process in which farmworkers themselves can begin articulating their interests. However, until such time as the Labour Relations Act is extended to cover farmworkers, and trade unions can begin representing farmworkers within such a framework, the trade union movement for farmworkers faces severe constraints, the most significant of which will be outlined in detail.

Trade unions have been active, so to speak, on farms in the Western Cape since November 1985, when COSATU formed the Farm Workers' Project (Community Education Resources, 1989:27). It was decided that the Farm Workers Project (FWP) should organize farmworkers under the auspices of the Food and Allied Workers Union (FAWU). As former general secretary Jan Theron points out, FAWU was the obvious choice because a lot of workers from the fruit and canning industries who were organised in FAWU, were either themselves living on farms, or had relatives on farms (interview, 11/06/1990). Furthermore, as FAWU was organising in the food processing plants, the union was seen to be a potential lever to pressurize farmers to meet certain demands. Whether FAWU was the best choice is a debatable point, that will be critically assessed later when I discuss the most suitable organisational

structure to organise and mobilise farmworkers. Jan Theron (interview, 11/06/1990) argues that whilst FAWU was, in his opinion, the best choice in terms of already established industrial unions, there were many factors that caused the failure of the FWP to effectively achieve its goals. Theron pointed to 'many problems in FAWU itself at the time it launched the FWP, causing its commitment to organising farmworkers to take second place. Then there were also bad choices made in terms of people to tackle the project ...' (interview, 11/06/1990).

The FWP's strategy was to target farmworkers who had some connection to those factories that were closely associated with farming. This took three forms:

1. Corporate-owned enterprises were targeted. Farms owned by the Premier and Tiger Oats Groups, as well as the large chicken and egg operations, such as Nu Laid, Farm Fare, and Rainbow Chickens, were examples of such farms. The landmark Rainbow Chickens judgement made by the Industrial Court, which demarcated the farm/factory divide and in effect meant that 'farmworkers' and their representative union could be included under the Labour Relations Act, was a particularly important early result of this strategy.
2. Farms that have some ownership connection to companies in which the trade unions are powerful, were also to be targeted. An example of such farms were those linked to the Anglo American Corporation. The union, or affiliated unions, could pressurize the company to meet certain

demands on the farm, through the mobilisation of organised industrial workers.

3. Organising the industrial workers in co-operatives was seen as a means to exert pressure on those farmers who were dependent on the co-operative for the marketing of agricultural products (interview with Jan Theron, 11/06/1990).

Furthermore, the FAWU FWP's strategy involved targeting workers in labour-intensive farming operations, such as tea, sugar, fruit and wine farms. Groups of farms in geographically contained areas such as Grabouw, were also to be targeted, 'in areas where there is a sense of collective identity, and you can conceive of all workers in that area taking a stand together' (interview with Jan Theron, 11/06/1990). The successful strike on three neighbouring farms in Grabouw in March 1988 (C.E.R., 1988:31), is an example of the realisation of such a strategy.

The penetration of FAWU FWP on the wine farms in the Western Cape over the past few years has been a slow and arduous affair. The difficulties in organising farmworkers are many. Some of these difficulties can, to a certain extent, be overcome with the precise analysis of the variables at play.

Wine farms tend, on the whole, to be privately-owned rather than company-owned. One should not, however, assume that company-owned farms always have a more 'enlightened' management than family

owned farms. Whilst it is true that the large company-owned farms are more open to trade unions organising their workers⁵, the smaller company-owned farms (not spatially, but rather those farms owned by smaller companies, often not listed on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange) often follow labour relations strategies comparable to those on family - owned farms. On both the company-owned farms in my study, Farms A and F, the owners/managers tended to be amongst the most conservative farmers interviewed, in terms of labour management.

Of more significance for trade union organisers would be to discern whether the farm is a small farm (employing less than twenty workers) or a large farm (employing up to two hundred workers), and the extent to which the farm is an agri-business. Ball (1990:54) defines an agri-business as:

- (i) farms that are owned by a company, or a group of companies, and/or
- (ii) farms that integrate their farming operations with processing.

Many privately-owned wine farms are comparable to agri-businesses in that they process the grapes that they harvest into wine. Four farms in my study (Farms A, B, E and H), in varying degrees, processed their own wine. Generally-speaking, the co-operative

⁵ There are often industrial relations benefits to be accrued both for the farm and the affiliated companies.

movement has greatly reduced the number of wine farms that process their own wine. However, a recent trend among wine farmers who process small quantities of wine with a small percentage of their harvest (Farms A and E) is to increase their capacity to produce wine, given the heightened prospects of an export market. This has all kinds of implications for the strategic opportunities for organisation. Trade unions have targeted larger farms (those employing more than one hundred workers): in terms of time and resources it is logistically far more productive to organise one hundred workers on one farm, than ten workers on ten farms. This is particularly significant when seen in the context of the insufficient physical and human resources the FAWU FWP had at its disposal. Most of the larger farms also produce their own wine, having their own estate labels. This made them particularly vulnerable to consumer boycotts and negative publicity, strategies often adopted by trade unions to increase their bargaining power (FAWU FWP Report, February 1989). Smaller farms that did not produce their own wine could also be made to conform to certain demands through effective organisation in the co-operatives. Unfortunately, FAWU is not very strong in the co-operatives around Stellenbosch (FAWU FWP Report, February 1989). In this regard, the National Council of Trade Unions' (NACTU), National Union of Wine, Spirits and Allied Workers (NUWSAW) has been more successful (interview Lennox McCarthy, NUWSAW organiser, 16/02/1990), having attained recognition agreements in both Koelenhof and Bottelary Co-operatives, where Farm A, D and G send their grapes for processing. Apart from winning concessions such as wage increases

and the implementation of a minimum wage, an additional two days annual leave, compassionate leave, a reduction in the length of the working week, and the provision of basic safety equipment such as safety boots and gloves, by successfully organising in the co-operatives, NUWSAW has effectively strengthened the position of NACTU's National Union of Farmworkers (NUF), both in terms of raising awareness in farmworkers of the benefits of joining NACTU, and in the potential for solidarity action between co-operative (industrial) workers and farmworkers.

Also important in influencing the effective organisation of farmworkers are the attitudes of both farmers/farm managers, and more importantly, farmworkers themselves. The Labour Relations Act has not yet been extended to cover farmworkers. This means that whilst farmworkers are not prohibited from joining trade unions, they are not protected against possible victimisation should they join. Given the fact that farmworkers lose their home, as well as their job, should they be dismissed, trade unions have to be particularly careful to target farms on which workers will be least vulnerable. Farms with potential, therefore, would be those with more 'liberal' management. Generally speaking, many of the farmers/farm managers who I interviewed in Koelenhof would fit into this category: only two farmers were vehemently opposed to trade unions organising their workers. Their farms notably happened to be the two largest farming operations, perhaps seeing themselves to be the most at risk to being approached by a trade union. I perceived that many

of the farmers of smaller farms (employing less than twenty workers) were not as antagonistic to the idea of trade union organisation amongst their workforce for the very reason that they did not see themselves as being targeted. Until the time that farmworkers are protected under the Labour Relations Act, trade unions have to 'tread very lightly', choosing their farms with the utmost care. One tactic to get around this problem, as employed by the FAWU FWP in their organisation of a strike on three farms in Grabouw in March 1988, is to find alternative employment for the farmworkers in case they were dismissed, vis-a-vis. a trade union organising in another industry/sector. However, such tactics are extremely difficult to put into practice, their adoption being the exception rather than the rule. The farmers of the forementioned three farms, who responded to the strikes by giving in, in part, to the demands of the striking farmworkers, are examples of the more 'liberally' managed farms that trade unions should target. Whilst many of these farms are Rural Foundation affiliated; this is not to say that farmers/farm managers on Rural Foundation farms are always more liberal and enlightened, and that farmers/managers who don't join the Rural Foundation are more conservative. In my study I found that the farmers/managers who did not belong to the Rural Foundation, were more open to the idea of trade unions organising their farmworkers than some Rural Foundation affiliated farmers. Often farmers/managers of the larger farms, with a relatively large labour force (over one hundred labourers), see the trade union process as an inevitable part of their industrial relations

system.⁶

Whatever the attitude of the employer, however, trade union ideas are not going to be accepted unless they make sense to the farmworkers themselves. Farmworkers live out their beliefs and practices within the parameters defined by the ideology of 'enlightened' paternalism. It is essential that trade unionists and other organic intellectuals⁷ of the counter-hegemonic bloc understand this dynamic: as Bozzoli (1986) reminds us, ideologies, such as trade unionism, that are being disseminated to ordinary people, in this case farmworkers, will not be accepted unless they make sense to these people in terms of their everyday experiences. Trade unionists will have to take into account the experiences and consciousness of the farmworkers, before attempting to disseminate trade unionist ideas, such as the idea that all capitalist relations of production (farming included) are characterized by a fundamental conflict of interest between employers and employees. This is contrary to the situation on wine farms in the Western Cape on which the ideology of 'enlightened' paternalism denies the existence of antagonism between workers and management (Du Toit, 1991:9). Such an ideology is characteristic of the unitarist perspective on labour

⁶ This is well illustrated in the case of the farmer of Farm B informing his workers that trade unions will be approaching them.

⁷ Gramsci (1971) employs the concept of organic intellectuals to describe those agents who have the social function of articulating and disseminating the ideology of a certain group.

relations, in which the company (in this case the farm) is compared to a family, or a team, in which all members share the same interests and goals (Maree, 1987). This perspective assumes peace is the norm and conflict pathological. In such a framework, conflict between employers and employees is explained to be the result of the interventions of influential individuals amongst the workers, ie.agitators, the result of 'faulty communications' between management and workers, or the autocratic behaviour of a specific manager (Hyman, 1972:58). By consequence, industrial peace can be restored by removing the agitator or autocratic manager, or providing effective channels of communication between management and employees (Ibid:59). Farmworkers themselves have internalized the notion of the farm as a consenting, harmonious community, effectively meaning that they do not conceive of their interests as being different to the interests of the farm as a whole. The result, du Toit (1991:10) argues, is the absence of a separate workers' discourse.

My research in Koelenhof confirmed du Toit's argument. Only two of the workers interviewed, both from Farm F, displayed elements of what I can broadly term 'worker consciousness'.⁸ Both these workers had learned about trade unions from the African poultry workers with whom FAWU FWP had made contact. Despite the employers' attempts to separate African and coloured workers' lives and hence interests, through the establishment of separate living quarters, separate liaison committees, and separate

⁸ Von Onselen (1973:2) defines worker consciousness as the demonstration by workers of the self-awareness of their position as exploited workers.

conditions of employment (with coloured workers having better terms), these two coloured vineyard workers seemed to be accepting the trade unionist ideas conveyed to them by their colleagues.

Scharf (1984) points to acts of resistance which can be conceived of as manifestations of worker consciousness. Scharf (1984:200-204) reports on farmworkers stealing fruit to subsidize their incomes, sabotage such as packing stones and scissors together with the grapes in the baskets to damage the destalking machines at the winery, driving a tractor into a ditch, vandalising property, and injuring animals, amongst others. Such conscious acts of sabotage surely presume a fundamental antagonism towards employers. However, the acts of sabotage reported by Scharf (1984) took place on coercively-managed farms. This is not to say that such action does not take place on co-optimely managed farms: it is rather the case that such action is more unlikely on such farms.

Whilst co-optive management might dissuade workers from engaging in such acts of resistance, at the same time, it facilitates the radicalization of workers through a very slight re-articulation of the discourse of 'enlightened' paternalism (Du Toit, 1991:13). Just as the farmer/farm manager attempts to close the meanings of 'enlightened' paternalism to meet his needs and interests, so too can farmworkers redefine these meanings to facilitate empowerment. Notions such as 'deel van die plaas' [part of the farm] and 'bring sy kant' [brings his side, i.e. mutual

obligation] can be subverted to strengthen workers' interests. According to du Toit (1991:11), 'The tables have been turned: whereas in the discourse of traditional paternalism it was the troublesome worker who was conceived of as disrupting the harmony of the farm, it is now the inhuman and undemocratic manager or farmer who is characterized in this way'. Within the framework of the interests of the farm, workers can make demands on management that could improve their well-being. These demands could be for polite and humane treatment, a wage increase, the re-instatement of a dismissed worker, a reduction in the length of the working day, the upgrading of living conditions, even recognition of a trade union. Crucial to this process would be the transformation of liaison committees, should there be any, into democratically- elected worker committees, either part of a trade union structure, or else supported by local advice office workers. Important here would be the dissemination amongst farmworkers, by farmworkers, of the idea that liaison committees do not represent the interests of farmworkers, and by association, the farm itself. These worker committees can potentially act as embryos of workers' power, and as a crucial ideological apparatus, with which to articulate and disseminate trade unionist, and other counter-hegemonic ideas and values.

Du Toit's (1991) argument that the movement for the empowerment of farmworkers should take place within the discourse of 'enlightened' paternalism, is correct. Any ideology that is disseminated to farmworkers that departs substantially from the discourse of 'enlightened' paternalism, and the related

world-view of farmworkers, is not going to be accepted. Any trade union that attempts to organise farmworkers on the wine farms in the Western Cape has to recognise this constraint, and structure its strategy accordingly.

However, even if trade unions articulate and disseminate their ideas within the framework of the discourse of 'enlightened' paternalism, severe constraints still serve to limit the effective empowerment of farmworkers. At the end of the day, workers still work 'for the house', and remain dependent on the goodwill of the farmer/farm manager. Besides having to meet the minimum conditions stipulated in the Basic Conditions of Employment Act, the farmer/manager is not obliged to meet any demands that workers or trade unions may make on them. Until farmworkers are included in the Labour Relations Act, and have recourse to formal arbitration and mediation procedures, the scales remain tipped in favour of the farmer. Farmworkers who attempt to articulate ideas that, ultimately, do not serve the interests of the farmer, may find themselves being victimized. It is these farmworkers, the intellectuals who arise from the rank-and-file, who are the crucial element in determining the outcome of the trade union movement for farmworkers. Trade unions need to recognise the vulnerability of these workers and structure their strategies accordingly. The effective organisation of farmworkers needs as its basic prerequisite the precise analysis of the social and power relations on farms. To facilitate this process, COSATU needs to establish a separate trade union for farmworkers. In the present structure, with the

organisation of farmworkers being performed by an industrial union, farmworkers continue to take second-place to urban-based industrial workers. Until such time as farmworkers can be effectively organised in trade unions, organizations such as advice offices have an important role to play in securing for farmworkers their basic rights, as laid down in the Basic Conditions of Employment Act, and common law. Only when farmworkers have the collective strength and security afforded to them by a trade union that is protected by labour legislation, can they begin articulating a distinctly separate workers' discourse that may incorporate a merging of interests with other exploited groups of the counter-hegemonic bloc.

4.11 CONCLUSION

This chapter has focused on the ways in which farmworkers are experiencing the restructuring process. It was argued that the change from coercive to co-optive labour management has not necessarily empowered farmworkers, nor reduced their dependence upon the farmer/farm manager. The relationship between farmer and farmworker is still characterised by paternalism, only the form has changed. Farmworkers themselves have internalized the ideology of 'enlightened' paternalism, and consequently interact with their employers on terms that are in the interests of the farm. Based on the recognition that the experience of farmworkers is powerfully influenced by the ideology of 'enlightened' paternalism, I followed du Toit's argument that the effective mobilisation of farmworkers on wine farms in the Western Cape can

only proceed by working within this framework. Ideas that are offered to farmworkers by trade unions and the intellectuals of other groups within the counter-hegemonic bloc, that are not presented in this language, are not going to make sense to farmworkers, and hence will not be accepted. To facilitate this process, democratic leadership comprised of farmworkers themselves, will need to emerge and liaise closely with trade union organisers, who are themselves part of an independent trade union for farmworkers.

CONCLUSION

Discussion, both descriptive and analytical, can be seen to have revolved around five interrelated themes:

1. Wine farmers in the Western Cape have, since the 1970s, been increasingly changing their methods of labour control from coercive to co-optive techniques. The reasons underlying these changes had to do with both the shortage of supply of coloured labour that wine farmers were experiencing in the 1970s and 1980s, as well as problems such as low productivity and inefficiency, amongst others, that were associated with farm labour on farms employing coercive forms of labour control. The improved living and working conditions that characterised co-optive labour management techniques were seen by farmers as a means to attract coloured labourers to the farms, entice them to remain on the farms, and motivate them to work more productively and efficiently. In a very real sense this strategy worked, with an increasing number of wine farmers adopting the new labour relations approach as they observed the benefits that accrued to the farmers/farm managers who had made the changes.
2. The Rural Foundation has played a central role in promoting and facilitating the changes to co-optive methods of labour control. This has taken many forms: courses in skills training for workers and supervisors, and in personnel

management and labour relations for farmers/farm managers; help with the implementation of liaison committees, as well as grievance and disciplinary procedures; and the Social Life programmes such as the upgrading of physical facilities for workers, education projects, and organising leisure activities for farmworkers, amongst others. However it must be pointed out that whilst the Rural Foundation has been an obvious catalyst in the change to co-optive labour management, membership thereof has not been a necessary precondition for change; many wine farmers who are not affiliated to the Rural Foundation have made the changes to co-optive labour management without the help of the Rural Foundation.

3. The changes to co-optive forms of labour control have resulted in corresponding changes in the form of paternalism that has characterised the relations of production on wine farms in the Western Cape for the past 300 years; 'traditional' paternalism has been reconstructed in a more 'enlightened' form to meet the changing needs of wine farmers. The essence of this change involves the shift from the farmer to the farm itself as the focus of farmworkers' loyalty, duty and obligation. Farmworkers are expected to behave as if the farm belonged to them. They therefore have a sense of responsibility to the farm (not the farmer), and should work as productively and cost-effectively as possible. Furthermore, farmworkers must ensure that the farm functions as harmoniously as possible,

and hence must communicate with the farmer/farm manager in order to avoid those situations that may lead to conflict between workers and management.

4. Whilst the change to co-optive management has improved working and living conditions for farmworkers, it has not necessarily reduced the dependency of farmworkers on the farmer, nor empowered farmworkers. Liaison committees, which are portrayed in co-optive managerial philosophy as those mechanisms through which farmworkers can articulate their interests, function within the parameters of the farmers'/farm managers' sanction. Authority remains the sole reserve of the farmer/farm manager, who through the notion of 'huis leegmaak', is able to maintain and reinforce his hegemony. As the farmworker from Farm H said, 'The boss lets you live You have to do what he says so that you can have a house and live'. Trade unions have an important role to play in facilitating the effective empowerment of farmworkers: in advancing and defending their rights, and in providing the security within which farmworkers themselves can begin articulating their interests. However, given the vulnerability of farmworkers to victimisation, trade unions are severely constrained by the fact that they have to attempt to organise farmworkers without the protection of the Labour Relations Act.

5. Farmworkers themselves have internalised the ideology of 'enlightened paternalism', with this ideology being

fundamental in the structuring of their work-place behaviour. This does not mean that farmworkers have been duped by ideology: the pattern of work-place behaviour that was displayed by farmworkers can be seen to be a consciously selected response within a context of limited strategic options. This behaviour can be seen to function in favour of the farmer/farm manager, with the 'interests of the farm' generally co-inciding with the interests of the farmer/farm manager. However, du Tuit (1991) points out that the meanings of 'enlightened paternalism' can be subverted and redefined to meet the needs and interests of farmworkers. By locating their demands within the notion of 'the interests of the farm', farmworkers can begin making demands on the farmer/farm manager for anything from improved living and working conditions, to recognition of a trade union. Trade unionists must recognise both the constraints and potentials of working within the discourse of 'enlightened paternalism' and structure their strategies accordingly. Ideologies which are presented to farmworkers that do not take into account the prevailing discourse of 'enlightened paternalism' will not be accepted by farmworkers.

The conceptual method employed in the dissertation can be seen to combine elements from both the structuralist and the social historian perspectives. The reason for drawing from both perspectives has to do with the recognition that, as they stand on their own, neither approach will do. The social historian

perspective lacks the abstraction that is necessary for the analyses of the generative mechanisms underlying and structuring observable social behaviour. On the other hand, the structuralist perspective is not sufficiently specific and concrete to provide empirically accurate information, and does not take human intentionality into account. Structuralist analyses provided the historical and theoretical contexts within which the regionally and historically specific case study of nine farms in Koelenhof was located. In this utilisation of both approaches the problems of reification associated with structuralism and those of voluntarism associated with the social historian method were to some extent overcome.

The interviews with nine farmers and 25 farmworkers from nine farms in Koelenhof provided invaluable information about the profile and attitudes of farmers and farmworkers on wine farms in the Western Cape. In this sense, the empirical evidence achieved far more than serving as a means to test the hypotheses and theoretical statements. Besides verifying the hypotheses advanced, the empirical information was used to construct theories explaining how agents (farmers and farmworkers) themselves conceived of their actions. This provided useful insights into the dialectical interplay between structure and agency: the ways in which structures and processes were constructing subjects, and in turn how agents and their practices were shaping these structures. Subjects were not conceived of as passive 'tragers'/bearers of ideology; as willing agents they interpreted social structures and processes, and consciously

selected their responses accordingly. The information gained from the interviews allowed for the understanding of how the process of restructuring in wine farming has been realised in practice, and the particular form that it has taken. The interviews also provided an in -depth look into the connections between the ideology of 'enlightened' paternalism and co-optive techniques of labour management, and how this prevailing ideology was influencing and shaping farmworkers' work-place behaviour. Furthermore, structured interviews with James Lamprecht of the Rural Foundation, Jan Theron of FAWU, and Lennox McCarthy of NUWSAW, as well as informal discussions with Andre Lyker of the Rural Foundation and Johann Hamman of FAWU's Farm Workers' Project elicited valuable information about their respective organisations and the level of these organisations' involvement in social processes and practices in Koelenhof. All these examples point to empirical evidence being central in the construction of theoretical statements. Hence this (realist) empirical methodology can be seen to draw from both the positivist and idealist frameworks in its utilisation of evidence both to confirm/refute hypotheses and to provide information around which theories could be constructed.

SOME FINAL REFLECTIONS ON CONTEMPORARY AGRARIAN SOCIAL RELATIONS IN SOUTH AFRICA

What trends and patterns are unfolding in agrarian social relations in South Africa? How has state policy towards agriculture changed in the past two decades? What is the nature

and effects of the restructuring process that is currently being undertaken by many sectors of agrarian capital in South Africa?. What do these fore-mentioned changes mean for farmworkers and the trade unions which are attempting to organise them? Are trade unions implementing the correct strategies? Are the interests of farmworkers being represented by the political movements and parties which are currently manoeuvring for positions of power for a post - apartheid South Africa? Whilst this final discussion will revolve around these questions, it must be understood that the aim of the discussion is to point to the areas of concern for those researching the agrarian question in South Africa, rather than to provide conclusive answers.

Commercial agriculture in South Africa has been characterized by extremely exploitative labour practices. Farmers, having little control over the price of 'constant' capital (land, machinery, technology, etc.) have sought to maximize profits through controlling the price of labour power. In this regard, the state has given farmers a free hand. This can be seen in the failure of the state to implement even the most basic of legislation regulating labour relations, and hence limit the rate of exploitation. However, since the mid 1970s, due to the accumulation crisis which has gripped the social formation as a whole, the state's policy toward commercial agriculture has changed (Marcus, 1989:25). As manufacturing and service industries have taken on a more significant role in the economy, and agriculture contributes decreasing proportions toward the gross national product, so has agriculture's powerful influence

over the state steadily declined. Furthermore, as South Africa strives to dismantle its racial order and establish a more democratic form of capitalism, so too is the government letting go of what was once an important sector of their political constituency, small and middle-sized farmers (Cooper, 1989:20). Many of these farmers have now joined the far-right opposition. Today, the state is actively promoting capital-intensive production in commercial agriculture, and articulating the interests of large and corporate agrarian capital. However, this pattern is by no means consistent; contradictions between state policy in agriculture and government tactics in the political sphere have emerged. Conservative small and middle-sized farmers still have some influence over the government, and by association the state, as illustrated in the continued postponement of the implementation of labour legislation called for by the National Manpower Commission.

Over the past four decades, capitalist agricultural production in South Africa has been undergoing a process of modernisation and rationalisation. This has taken the form of the concentration and centralisation of capital, mechanisation, and the changing nature of labour exploitation (Stavrou, 1987). With regards the concentration and centralisation of capital, Marcus (1989:7-9) reports a steady decrease in the number of farm units, with a growth in farm size. The number of farm units decreased from approximately 117 000 in 1950 to just over 60 000 in 1990, whilst the average farm size rose from 800 hectares in 1955 to 1300 hectares in 1990 (Dor, 1992:28). According to Marcus

(1989:9) the number of farm owners contracted by 40% between 1950 and 1984. The result of this process in terms of both employment and production patterns has been dramatic: Marcus (1989:40) reports that in 1983, 6.3% of all commercial farming enterprises employed 64% of the total agrarian labour force, whilst in 1983, 30% of farming enterprises in South Africa produced 75% of South Africa's agricultural income (Krikler, 1987:107). At the same time commercial agriculture in South Africa has, since 1950, witnessed a steady increase in the organic composition of capital. There has been a dramatic increase in capital investment in machinery and implements as a relative proportion of the gross capital formation in agriculture. In 1937, only 18.2% of investment in capital goods was spent on machinery, whilst in 1984 this figure was 77.3% (Abstract of Agricultural Statistics [1988] cited in Stavrou, 1987:22). The other trend in commercial agriculture identified by Stavrou (1987) and Marcus (1989) has been the move towards employing a smaller, more stable, and more highly skilled permanent labour force. However, it must be pointed out that the process of restructuring in agriculture in South Africa has not been uniform for all agricultural sectors. Wine farming, for example, has not undergone the capital concentration and centralisation nor the mechanisation that has characterised maize or wheat farming. Unlike these maize and wheat farmers, wine farmers have been primarily restructuring labour relations on their farms.

Without accounting for the reasons underlying the restructuring process being undertaken by all agricultural sectors in South

Africa (this is beyond the focus and scope of this dissertation), it is important to note some of the more general implications of restructuring for farmworkers and the trade union movement. Marcus (1989) suggests that smaller farms tend to be more reliant on labour-intensive methods of production, with the cost of labour-power being a more significant variable for smaller enterprises than larger ones. Whilst it may be true that there is a tendency toward greater uniformity in the conditions of employment on larger farms, it would be a grave mistake, however, to assume that farmworkers are less exploited and have better conditions of employment on these larger, more capital-intensive farms. Whilst this may be true in many cases, there are a number of other important variables that need to be considered when discerning the conditions of employment on different farms, not least of all the level of profitability of the enterprise. Wine and fruit farms in the Western Cape, for example, whilst remaining relatively small-scale and labour-intensive, offer among the best working and living conditions for farmworkers in the country. The reasons for this have to do with the particular technique of labour management, rather than the size of the enterprise and the level of mechanisation.

Krikler (1987:101) suggests that trade unions should target those areas of agrarian capitalism where the process of monopolisation is most advanced. Whilst the level of monopolisation in agriculture is relatively low compared to other sectors of capital such as manufacturing or mining, he argues that 65% of the agrarian workforce is employed by 6.3% of all farming

enterprises, making these enterprises particularly strategic targets for trade unions. While the size of the farming enterprise is, by all means and purposes, an important consideration for those strategising the unionisation of farmworkers, there are other variables that must be considered. Also targeted should be those sectors of agrarian capital that are most profitable, namely deciduous fruit, wine, citrus, sugar, timber, and wool (Krikler, 1987:101). Furthermore, those farms that can be categorized as agribusiness (company owned farms and enterprises that integrate farming with processing) are also particularly strategic for the rural trade union movement (Ball, 1990:54).

Given the fact that the Labour Relations Act has not been extended to cover farmworkers, and farmworkers are particularly vulnerable to being victimised, trade unions need to be extremely sensitive in their task of organising farmworkers. The effective organisation of farmworkers can only proceed on the basis of the precise analysis of the relations of power on farms. As well as objective criteria such as the nature of ownership, size of enterprise, agricultural sector etc, this would entail understanding the culture, experiences and work-place behaviour of farmworkers, and the particular relations of dominance being practiced on the farm. Whilst several of COSATU's industrial unions are organising farmworkers - Paper, Wood and Allied in the timber plantations, Orange Vaal General Workers Union on the Anglo American farms, and the Food and Allied Workers Union on the wine and fruit farms in the Western Cape - COSATU has not yet

made a firm commitment to farmworkers, with only 5% of farmworkers in South Africa being unionised (Bosch,1991). A separate trade union for farmworkers needs to be established as a matter of urgency, so that the process of empowering farmworkers can take root.

Just as farmworkers have taken second place to urban-based industrial workers within the progressive trade union movement, so to have the interests of farmworkers been marginalised in the national liberation alliance, with the interests of urban communities taking priority. This may change to some extent, however, as political parties recognise the strategic importance of the vote of farmworkers in the forthcoming election. Whether these parties will actually represent the interests of farmworkers or merely pay them lip - service remains to be seen.

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INTERVIEW FOR KOELENHOF FARMERS AFFILIATED TO RURAL FOUNDATION

Question 1

With regards the ownership of this farm, is it individually/ privately owned, or company owned? Do the owners own any other farms? For how long have you/they owned this farm?

Question 2

Approximately how large (spatially) is the farm?

Question 3

Apart from grapes for the making of wine, is anything else farmed? If so, approximately what percentage of the total farming enterprise does wine-farming comprise?

Question 4

What is the size of the work force on this farm, and what divisions (on the grounds of skill and job description) exist amongst workers? Do you ever employ temporary labour?

Question 5

Do you bottle/produce your own wine, or are you a member of a co-operative?

Question 6

How is the distribution of your bottled wine carried out? Is the market local and/or international?

Question 7

When did you join the Rural Foundation, and what motivated you to do so?

Question 8

Which Rural Foundation services/recommendations have you adopted? Which have you found particularly helpful?

Question 9

With regards labour management, has the Rural Foundation programme been useful in any way? Have your labour management techniques changed in the past 5 years? If yes, why?

Question 10

Are there liaison committees on your farm? Is so, how do you see these as functioning?

Question 11

What do you think about trade unions attempting to organize and represent farmworkers?

Question 12

What are your feelings concerning the expected implementation (this year) of labour legislation affecting the conditions of employment of farmworkers?

Question 13

What are your feelings towards the present political and economic climate in South Africa?

Question 14

How do you view the future of wine farming in South Africa?

INTERVIEW FOR THOSE KOELENHOF FARMERS NOT AFFILIATED TO THE RURAL
FOUNDATION

Question 1

With regards the ownership of this farm, is it individually/
privately owned, or company owned? Do the owners own any other
farms? For how long have you/they owned this farm?

Question 2

Approximately how large (spatially) is the farm?

Question 3

Apart from grapes for the making of wine, is anything else
farmed? If so, approximately what percentage of the total
farming enterprise does wine-farming comprise?

Question 4

What is the size of the work force on this farm, and what
divisions (on the grounds of skill and job description) exist
amongst workers? Do you ever employ temporary labour?

Question 5

Do you bottle/produce your own wine, or are you a member of a co-operative?

Question 6

How is the distribution of your bottled wine carried out? Is the market local and/or international?

Question 7

With regards labour management, have your labour management techniques/practices changed in the past years? If so, why? If not, do you foresee changes in the next 5 years?

Question 8

Are there any structures/mechanisms by which you can negotiate/communicate with farmworkers? If so, how do you see these as functioning?

Question 9

What do you think about trade unions attempting to organize and represent farmworkers?

Question 10

What are your feelings concerning the expected implementation (this year) of labour legislation affecting the conditions of employment of farmworkers?

Question 11

What are your feelings towards the present political and economic climate in South Africa?

Question 12

How do you view the future of wine farming in South Africa?

INTERVIEW WITH JAMES LAMPRECHT, THE LABOUR RELATIONS "EXPERT" OF
THE RURAL FOUNDATION

Question 1

What are the basic aims of the Rural Foundation? Who does the Rural Foundation (RF) represent, and to whom is it accountable?

Question 2

The RF receives between 60% and 65% of its funding from the government. To what extent is the RF accountable to the needs of the South African Agricultural Union and to what extent are its policies autonomous?

Question 3

To what extent do you see the process of modernisation/rationalisation of wine farmers in the Western Cape being hampered by historically established relations between employer and employee - here I'm referring specifically to forms of paternalism? How does this affect RF initiatives?

Question 4

Why are wine farmers joining the Rural Foundation programmes?
What do you think motivates them?

Question 5

With regards farmworkers, accommodation is closely tied up with employment; they are paid "in-kind" and are not "free" wage labourers. How does this affect Rural Foundation labour relations strategies?

Question 6

Central to Rural Foundation labour relations policies is the establishment of liaison committees. To what extent are farmworkers becoming involved in these liaison committees? How does the Rural Foundation see these liaison committees as affecting the bargaining power of farmworkers.

Question 7

How does the Rural Foundation view the progressive trade union movement that is attempting to organise farmworkers in the Western Cape?

Question 8

How would changes in state legislation regarding the conditions of employment of farmworkers affect Rural Foundation policies and strategies?

INTERVIEW FOR FARMWORKERS

QUESTION 1

- (i) What is your age?
- (ii) Are you married?
- (iii) Do you have any children? If so, how many?
- (iv) Which members of your family reside on the farm?

QUESTION 2

- (i) How long have you worked, and lived on the farm?
- (ii) What was your previous occupation?
- (iii) Where did you previously reside?

QUESTION 3

- (i) Have you been to school? If so, what is the highest standard passed?
- (ii) Have you had any other training?

QUESTION 4

What is your job on the farm?

QUESTION 5

What is your wage? Do you get any other kind of payments? Does the farmer give you a bonus?

QUESTION 6

Do you plan to remain working on the farm for the rest of your life? If not, why?

QUESTION 7

- (i) Have your living or working conditions improved in the last few years? If so, how?
- (ii) Why do you think the farmer is doing this?

QUESTION 8

If you have got a complaint, how do you go about telling the farmer? Does he normally attend to your complaints?

QUESTION 9

- (i) Has there ever been a strike, a work stoppage, or any other act of collective resistance against the farmer?
- (ii) Have any workers been fired lately, or resigned of their own choice? If so, why?

QUESTION 10

- (i) What are your feelings towards trade unions?
- (ii) Do you think you may be victimized should you join a trade union?

QUESTION 11

- (i) Which political leaders and/or political parties do you support?
- (ii) What are your feelings about the release of Nelson Mandela?

QUESTION 12

(For female farmworkers only): What do you think would happen to your house, should your husband be fired?

INTERVIEW WITH JAN THERON, FORMER GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE FOOD
AND CANNING WORKERS UNION, AND THE FOOD AND ALLIED WORKERS UNION

QUESTION 1

Could you elaborate on the strategy to organise farmworkers that has been adopted by COSATU?

QUESTION 2

Which farmworkers do you think should first be targeted?

QUESTION 3

What are some of the major problems faced by trade unions which are attempting to organise farmworkers?

QUESTION 4

Are the state and agricultural employers changing their attitudes to trade unions for farmworkers? What implications do these changes have for the trade union movement for farmworkers?

QUESTION 5

What do you think is the likelihood that COSATU will establish a separate trade union for farmworkers in the next few years?